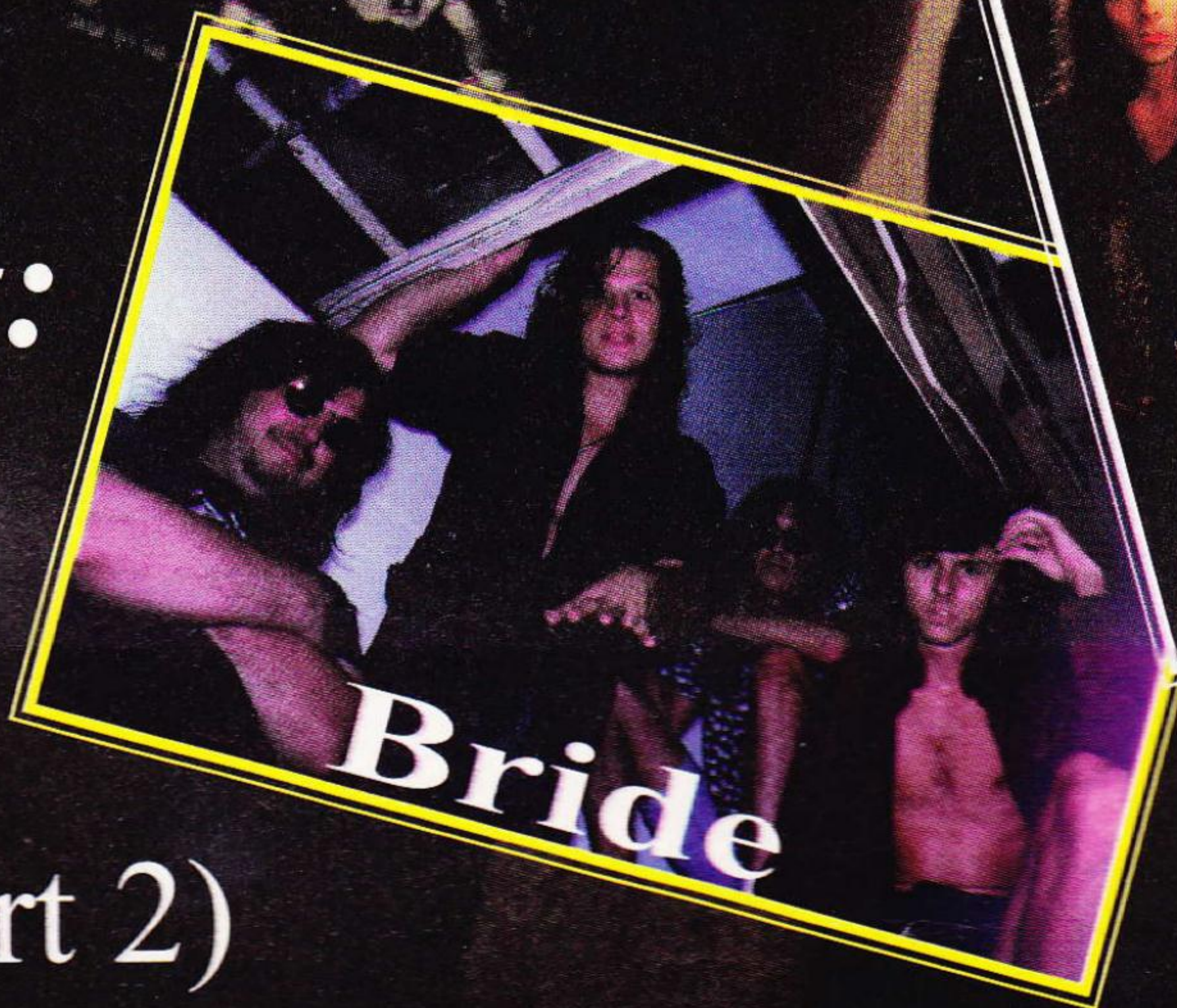


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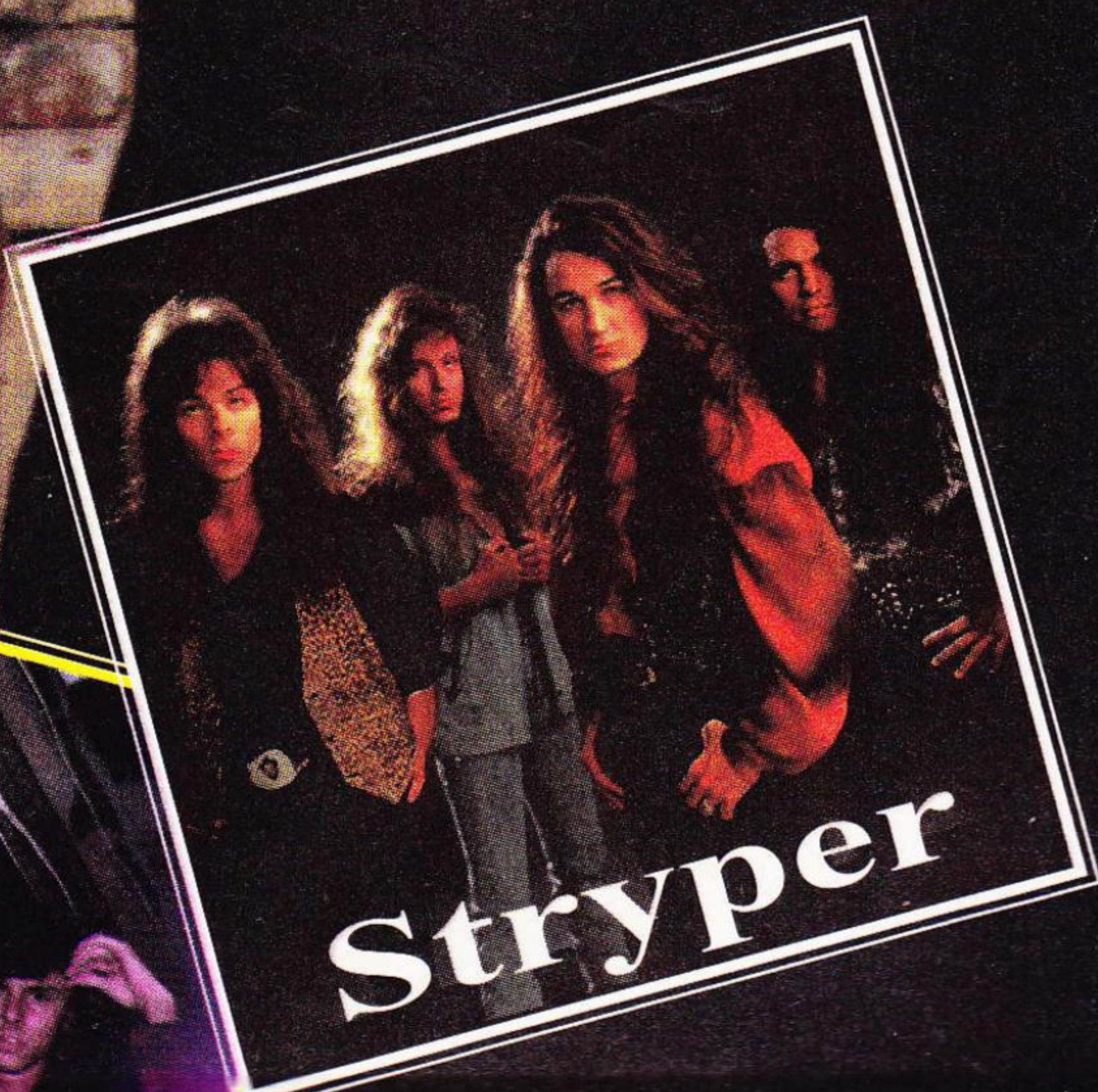
THE CRUCIFIED



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Issue Number 32
November/December

Dedicated to my sweet cat, Holiness, who probably won't live past the printing of this issue, due to an ugly cancerous tumor. He has been a wonderful companion for over 20 years. He became like a daughter to me. (2 Samuel 12:3)

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Heaven's Metal is a bi-monthly publication promoting, investigating, and critiquing Christian heavy metal.

JESUS SAID, "Woe to him who causes one of these little ones to stumble. It would be better for him to have a millstone tied around his neck and thrown into the sea." In the Deliverance, Bride, and Mortification interviews in this issue, there may be some things brought up about the Christian music industry that confuse you. This was not printed to make you stumble, but to make the people involved in this industry think about what they're doing and to put a little bit of the fear of Almighty God, a respect out of reverence for the power and judgment He holds, into the thinking of how and why we are in this business called music ministry, and maybe to warn little ones with aspirations for music ministry to take heed the Proverbs call to "seek wisdom." It's neat how this issue is woven together, with the aforementioned interviews, David Bach's creative advice column for musician hopefuls and the article on accountability. They are all closely related. Please pray that there would be a true revival, with repentance, tears, and changed lives, inside the Christian music industry. Pray for me and this magazine. We've taken a stand

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and we want to take heed lest we fall. Please³ pray for Heaven's Metal! We can't expect not to incite some sort of enemy attack in the spiritual realm for taking a stand for truth and righteousness (that not of our own, but Christ alone). If you are disillusioned, please see this as a sign of hope, for we are talking about these things and beginning to bring them out on the table. The next step is the altar, so see beyond the sin to the Savior!

There are a few **Back Issues** of HM available. They are: #19 (Shout); #20 (Sacred Warrior); #22 (Bloodgood); #23 (Vengeance); #24 (Holy Soldier); #25 (Whitecross); #26 (Magdallan); #27 (Deliverance); #28 (Believer); #29 (Jet Circus); #30 (One Bad Pig); and #31 (X-Sinner). All others are sold out. Each copy is \$2.95 (Foreign orders add \$3 Air Mail postage).

Heaven's Metal Posters are still available from some issues at \$1 each: Holy Soldier; Believer; King's X; Vengeance (B&W); Les Carlsen (B&W); Ray Parris (B&W); and Zion (B&W).

Heaven's Metal T-Shirts are available. They are a 2-sided "deluxe" model design with six colors in the back and two in the front. 100% cotton white shirts. \$15 (plus \$1 postage).

The original one-sided "econo" models are only available in black 50/50 shirts. \$10 each (postage included). All t-shirts are available in M, L, & XL.

Heaven's Metal Buttons come in red, blue, and yellow and are \$1 each (Plus 25 cents postage/Foreign orders \$1).

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BENDING THE CRUCIFIED'S EAR

There's something unassuming about the band The Crucified. Maybe the members have taken to heart the admonition of Jesus for "a servant not to be greater than his master," for these guys don't play the schmooz, "lets impress the media" games. A distant look at these guys may reveal four relaxed people willing to smile and laugh with others. A closer look may show four individuals who are very quiet, yet together with musical instruments become very loud. Listen in to a quiet moment with vocalist Mark Solomon, drummer Jim Chaffin, and guitarist Greg Minier.

****Why don't you guys tell me how you feel about your latest album?**

"It's good," snaps drummer Jim Chaffin. "Next question."

"We're pretty happy with it," comments vocalist Marc Salomon. "I know I am. I feel that a lot of maturity has come about in this album."

"I feel it's a lot better than the first one," says Jim. "If not just the production, the song structures, and the way it flows, and lyrically, definitely. The Lord's really blessed Mark with lyrics that are insightful and scriptural. It was cool, because we had a chance to let our pastor check 'em out and stuff, which we didn't do before. It not only kept things scripturally correct, it was just good to have that reaffirming and knowing that these things are coming from the Lord and not some far off weird ideas that Mark had. They're from the Word."

"It's a whole energy thing on the album too. It's almost capturing the kind of energy we have live...maybe not quite, but it still has that real raw power. The last one didn't at all. That I'm happy with. Just the whole packaging that Ocean did for us. Ocean is doing a really good job for us. We're real happy with that."

"I think it's good," comments shredmeister Greg Minier. "Overall lyrically I think it's really cool, really great. Musically and sonically it's a heck of a lot better than the first one. I'm real pleased with it. I know it could've been better if we had some more time, but we were rushed. We had a deadline. It could've sounded a little better, but I don't have too many complaints about it."

****Why don't you tell me about the little tour you took this summer?**

"It had it's ups and downs," says Greg. "There was a lot of growth that came not only through the album, but that tour. So many things were realized, as far as each other's character, so much cool fellowship with different people, and different band members and pastors and what-not. That was like the best thing about it. The fact that even though the shows weren't big. We only had five shows within two and a half weeks. It was like a total growing experience. Quite a few people got saved. Especially at the last show we did in Oklahoma. I think one person got saved at the show, but the



Jeff, Mark, Jim, and Greg

show was having massive effects afterwards."

"They were holding Bible studies at the same place that had the show," explains Jim, "and several people who were at the show have since then come forward and accepted Christ. The promoter has been in contact with us, and was just really excited. He said the Holy Spirit's been doing such a work. The awesome thing about that was that to us...to Mark and I, as far as fleshing out, was probably one of our worst times. It just showed us that the Lord works in spite of us. That always blows me away, not that it gives us any kind of excuse, but I know that God's Word went out and the Holy Spirit was the One Who was working. It wasn't because we were doing anything in particular or that we're so spiritual. It was like there was four sinners up there doing their thing, fleshing out a tad bit, and the Holy Spirit used His Word and it went forth and touched people's hearts. That was really cool. Cornerstone was pretty ragin'."

****How do those small headlining shows differ from your Cornerstone show?**

"It's just smaller," says Jim. "I don't think we play any different, to tell you the truth. We played the same pretty much every show. Maybe at some points there was a little more energy, because of the crowd response, but we played just as hard (each time). Spiritually I think sometimes it's a little better. It seems like there's more intimate contact with kids at the smaller shows, because you're not so bogged down by 50 kids comin' up wanting to talk and whatever. With a couple of kids to talk to, you can concentrate on 'em and it's a cool atmosphere for sharing. In that respect it's different. Musically it isn't any different at all. We try to keep the same intensity wherever we play."

****How do you guys remain so tight? You were ragin' in Austin when you played.**

"I don't know," laughs Greg. "Good question. Sometimes we do, sometimes we don't. Like, with the old songs, it's just that we've practiced them so much. We practice like once a week now. After you get into a routine, like when we practice, we just practice the set. We go and practice the set that we're doing at the show. So, we're always playing in that format, so when we go play live, it's nothing new at all. We're already used to playing the songs in that order, and we're used to playing them one right after another."

****Why don't you tell me a little bit about the kind of music you play and the "phenomenon" of crossover music, the scene you guys have been involved in?**

"I guess it doesn't seem like a crossover to us," explains Mark, "because it just felt the most natural to us. All of us have different backgrounds musically. The two major ones are metal and hardcore punk rock and all that. So, as time went by, it just became the natural progression. It really didn't have anything to do with what everyone else was doing or anything like that. It was just what we felt like doing. Our basic intention in all the music that we make is to make it as powerful as can be, so whatever it takes... If it takes some basic hardcore riffs or stuff... Sometimes that has more energy than some cheesy metal riff or whatever, but then the heavy accent and some of the double kicks, as far as I'm concerned, has way more power than a lot of the punk rock out there. I guess a lot of people are calling us that now, but as far as music goes we've just been playing the kind of music that came out (of us)."

**Have you had a real intimate awareness of life on the streets and the pain, like the song “So Called Living 1991”?

“I was never on the streets,” says Mark, “but I’ve known people. People come to me who were. I don’t ever want to claim to be something that I’m not. I just want to make sure that nobody takes that wrong. What I do know is what I see. I have friends who are from the dirtbag, gutter punk rock scene, you know what I mean? I hear what they say, and I see the look on their face, just like the song says. These people are my friends, and I care about ‘em, and I see the lives that they lead. Really, I’m no different than nobody else. Everyone knows people like that. It’s my responsibility, I feel, to get involved with those people’s lives, and try to direct them towards the Lord. If there’s any kind of awareness of the streets or something like that, it comes from the perspective of somebody just trying to help ‘em get out.”

“Some of that actually happened when you were living in that one apartment,” adds Jim.

“I just lived in this apartment for a few months when I first moved out,” says Mark. “Before, I lived in this little house in the middle of the country, where there’s nothing but weeds and coyotes and stuff like that, and then I move into this apartment. I don’t even know why I did it. Now I think God intended me to do this. It was a rough time, but I learned so much. It opened my eyes to the real world. I lived in this apartment in the horrible part of town, because a friend of ours managed it, and they were going to give me a good deal. I didn’t have very much money, so I moved into this place. It’s like right in the center of all the prostitution and all the drug deals and stuff. It’s got the heavy-duty traffic going through there and stuff. The name of the apartment complex is Trade Winds, and that’s what I’m talking about in that song. The stuff that went on there...you could say that was intimate.

“It opened my eyes to the life that I had been sheltered from. The people that I met there and the things that they were going through. My heart went out to them, which was totally by God. Before I either was ignorant of it, or just didn’t want to hear it. I didn’t want to deal with that kind of stuff. I don’t ever want to come off as some ignorant person who judges those people unfairly, because I think a lot of times that happens. Someone isn’t aware of what’s going on in the street, or whatever, and goes in there because they saw Hill Street Blues and now they know everything.

“I learned a lot about the people, and that you got to take time and you gotta get to know ‘em. You know, you can’t walk up to a person and cram the Bible down their throat, who just got shot the night before or stabbed in the back of a 7-11 on a beer run. You don’t just walk up to that person and, if you don’t know ‘em, you can’t read off Wednesday night Bible study witnessing crap. ‘This is what you do when you see a person on the street.’ You can’t do that, because really you don’t know their lives, and they’re not going to respect you. That does not mean by any means to get involved and

participate in the lives that they lead, but to get involved and know them and love them. Take a little effort and a little time and (it’s) totally God, because, when I try to do it on my own, I start making judgments or whatever. When it’s the Lord, I get to know these people, and they open up to me, because they see God in me. That’s what I’m here for. That’s what we are all here for, regardless of street people, Wall Street people or whatever. That was about three years ago. Then I moved back home, and now I live back in town again. These people I met at the time, I’ve kept in contact with ‘em. It’s everywhere. That’s another thing. The neighborhood I live in is supposed to be really nice, but it’s not. It’s the same as the rest. The same stuff goes on. God’s got me there. So, in that sense, I guess you could say, ‘Yeah, we’ve got an intimate relationship with it.’

**I really like your lyrics, Mark. A lot of these tunes are like things I’ve thought about that I’ve wanted to say to somebody after I’ve witnessed to ‘em, like the song “The Wrong One.”

“Praise God,” replies Mark. “I’m hearing that a lot, and I thank Him. I praise God that He’s using me. Not that it has anything to do with intellectualism or anything like that, but some of the people that listen to our music have to be approached that way. They’ll think about it. I listen to a lot of the stuff in the so-called Christian market and it’s all about the same thing—something I read in a Bible study book or something.”

“It’s not like I have a problem with Christians talking about some biblical story or something like that,” says Jim, “but as far as where we’re coming from, if we want to call ourselves an evangelical kind of a band, we’ve got to bring the Gospel to people. We can’t expect them to understand our Christian lingo, like, ‘the regeneration of... propitiation, eschatology’ and stuff. All those things have their place, but, as far as the average listener of our music, people don’t give a flip about that. I would scarcely say that they, for the most part, wouldn’t even try to understand it. They’d just go, ‘Cool music,’ and pass it up. Like Mark said, the Lord’s really put an awareness on us that you’ve got to come to them where they’re at. I think in a way, the Lord’s really put that on Mark’s heart. That’s why the lyrics came out the way they did. I don’t want to say street-level, because we’re not living that kind of a lifestyle, but in a sense it’s true, because like Mark said, just knowing where people are coming from... We have the same feelings. We’re sharing our feelings with them and showing them, ‘I have this feeling,’ or ‘this might be the way you think, but here’s the truth,’ in a plain, simple way.”

“These people have legitimate concerns, you know what I mean?” says Mark. “Legitimate questions and stuff. Rather than feeding them some Christian dogma, you know what I mean—the lingo, or feeding them some totally self-glorifying political statement or jumping on the soapbox and letting them all know our ‘political correctness’ or whatever—we feel that our purpose, our duty is to answer the

questions that these people have with Jesus.”

“It’s just like 1 Peter 3:15,” says Jim: “Sanctify Christ as Lord in your heart and be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks for the hope that is in you.” That’s not always to a Jehovah’s Witness or a Dianetics person who needs a theological discourse, but it’s also for the kid who says, ‘I hurt. Why am I hurting? How can I make it stop?’”

“That’s the kid that nobody cares about,” says Mark.

“Right,” adds Jim. “Nobody understands him. Sometimes we don’t, but I do know that ‘We don’t have a high priest that can’t sympathize with us,’ and that’s what we share. Like Mark was saying, when we of ourselves start trying to tell logically why God exists and all this stuff.. There’s truth to it, but what’s going to bring a kid to a saving knowledge is to share with them what Jesus has done. To share with them the life that He has given. ‘Your life stinks, because you’re a sinner. You’re no good, and you need a Savior.’ It’s just like John did, he pointed to Jesus and said, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world. There He is.’”

“The Crucified is of no importance when it comes to our standing with God.”

“It’s definitely not going in and using our witnessing leverage of, ‘Hey, just because you’re a Christian doesn’t mean you can’t have fun.’ All that junk. That stuff doesn’t make any difference, you know what I mean? They don’t care about that. They’re like, ‘I ain’t having any fun right now, so what’s in it for me?’ You’ve gotta remember that a lot of these people: a lot of the punk rockers, the hardcore kids, and a lot of the style of music is very politically aware. There’s a lot of doctrines, whatever they may be, floating around in there. These people have been lied to all their lives. You’ve gotta take that into consideration before you answer any questions. Ultimately it’s just always ending up pointing ‘em to Jesus. We’ve done the thing where we point ‘em to ourselves and they’ve gone away.”

**It’s really cool that you take that approach. One verse that’s always meant a lot to me is Proverbs 27:21, which says, “The crucible for silver, and the furnace for gold, but a man is tested by the praise accorded him.” To me that means: like when you say, “Praise the Lord” instead of saying, “Thanks a lot, pat me on the back again.” That’s when you pass the test.

“The Lord keeps reminding me,” says Mark. “He lets me know that I’ve got to keep that in mind.”

“In the last couple of months,” adds Jim, “whatever insight that might come out of our mouth, like I said, it’s been coming from our pastor, not him necessarily, but his boldness and his challenges to stir us up and not to just pat us on the back and say, ‘Great! You’re in a Christian band! Well, praise God. We’ll see ya later.’ And then what do you do? He’s totally

challenged us to where we understand the fact that The Crucified is of no importance when it comes to our standing with God. What God cares about is Jim Chaffin and Mark Salomon and Greg Minier and Jeff Belew, and what our relationship with Him is like. That is of the utmost importance. That's the whole point. The rest of this stuff, like, if the Lord can use us, then great. But, we've been so programmed to think that we're okay, because we're in a band. I think sometimes we get patted on the back and people tell us that we're so right on and stuff like that, and we started believing it."

"Maybe not a case of the big head and all that," explains Mark, "but a case of thinking that everything's alright."

"Right," agrees Jim, "thinking, 'My walk is great. There's no problems, because so and so told me that this song touched him. So, my walk must be great.' In a way, it's taking glory to ourselves and applying it, instead of saying, 'Well, that's the Lord.' Understanding that it's the Lord using that song. That's not me and what's going on in my life. That is something that has been going on and a major change in the band. I would like to personally challenge all the other bands who feel like they're in a ministry to realize that and to know that the utmost importance is your relationship with Jesus Christ. I'm not talking about going to church every Sunday. What is your relationship with Jesus Christ like? Are you witnessing when you're not on stage? I'm not saying this out of any self righteousness. I gotta challenge myself too. What am I doing on my job? What am I doing on the street? What am I doing when I go into a store? What is my life like when I'm not on stage? That is something that God has really put in our hearts. I haven't seen it said enough. So many times we're focused on album sales and how many people were at your show, and what-not."

"It's almost as if that's all anyone wants to talk about," adds Mark.

"It's a real bummer," says Jim, "because you get caught up in it. You get a sense that it's okay. There's a place to talk about those things, but for the most part, I think the Lord would rather have us doing like we're doing now and talking about Him. Having fellowship, not in music, but in Jesus. Gosh, at the risk of sounding fake, it's been something that's been real exciting to the four of us. It's a new realization of what we're here for."

"Priorities," says Mark, "you know what I mean?"

"I don't know how many times we've sung 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness,'" says Jim, "but boy, that's reality. That's truth."

"We want to encourage all the brothers and sisters in the bands too," says Mark, "along with questioning where they are and what they're doing, to be in fellowship. To be accountable to a pastor. It's not just important for the things we're sharing now, but also just with getting another perspective on reality. I don't know, with some of the stuff that he's asking me and everything, it just shows me that I live in my own world, you know? It's sort of like a Christian musician is different from a

Christian janitor or a Christian secretary."

**In the sense of a value system, there's no difference, but in the sense of responsibility, there's a huge difference.

"Well, you know, the Word says that we have different functions," says Mark.

"It's a dangerous position that God has put us in," adds Jim. "That's another thing that's funny. How much people desire to be on stage or desire to be pastors, but man, it's such a dangerous thing. There's so much opportunity for the flesh. It's everywhere, dude. It's a very, very dangerous place to be. We're telling people about Jesus. No, we're not pastors, but a lot of kids take what we say and they're totally listening to every word we say. If we're not correct, if we're not teaching truth, we've got a heavy burden; and we've got a heavy responsibility before the Lord. He says, 'Let not many of you be teachers, for you are gonna incur stricture judgment.' I think that applies to musicians. Those who want to be evangelical, those who say they are telling the truth. That's a heavy responsibility. It's not always an easy burden to carry, but when the Lord gives it to you, it comes with peace and it comes with joy too."

"Please don't idolize us. Don't exchange your worship for Slayer for worship for Vengeance. Idolize Jesus. Make Him your focus of worship."

"It's definitely not something to be feared when the Lord brings it to you," adds Mark. "I know my natural tendency, when I'm reading something like this about musicians and everything is to turn it off and not listen. But one thing I've been encouraged by my pastor to do is to take the things that we're sharing and consider whether or not it might be true in my own life. I would just want to say that to the bands who are reading this. This is not honestly a judgmental thing at all. It's just to take it and consider whether or not it's true for your own life."

"Just to ask yourself whether or not we're straight with our relationship with the Lord, and whether or not we're being accountable. The first thing is to just go, 'Yeah, I am. I am,' and to go along merrily. Make sure that you're straight with the Lord. Ask Him to show you if you're not. That's what I have to do everyday."

**What do you have planned for the future?

"Well you see, we've got this thing," explains Mark, "where you make plans, but you don't count on 'em, just in case the Lord doesn't have that for you. Be prepared, but be willing to change, if He's got something else going on."

"What do we have planned?" asks Jim. "Nothing. We've got a few shows planned. Right now everything's kind of in limbo actually. The album's been out for about a month, and ads are just coming out. They're supposedly trying

to work out a distribution deal with some secular company besides Epic. Epic probably will do it. For those who don't know, we're distributed by Word. Word has a deal with Epic to pick up some Word bands. They're in secular stores all over the place, but Epic isn't pushing the acts, they're just distributing 'em. The record company is looking for someone who's willing to push it and not just distribute it. We're without a booking agent, so things aren't happening a whole lot with that."

"I'm looking forward to getting back into the groove of things," says Mark. "I personally feel like the Lord's been bringing me stuff to think about and write songs for the next album. I'm not talking about releasing another album all of a sudden or anything like that, but I just feel like the Lord's been blessing me with stuff to think about."

**How do you feel about the aspect that any music a Christian band makes is going to be used to entertain Christians?

"It's not a whole heck of a lot you can do," says Mark.

"It has it's place," explains Jim. "I think it's cool to encourage them. I don't think it's wrong for a Christian to be entertained, but I think there are quite enough bands out there to take care of that. If we entertain Christians, that's great. I'm not affected by that, but if not to encourage them and uplift them to a closer walk, then definitely to bring non-Christians to a saving knowledge of Jesus. That's our main focus. Of course, if you go to Cornerstone, you're obviously not there for a wide evangelical thing. It's mainly a Christian entertaining thing. The evangelism goes on, but for the most part, it's an entertainment thing."

"The fact that brothers and sisters come to the shows," says Mark, "and they come to me and say, 'Hey man, we had a good time and we feel lifted up,' dude, that's great. My point is, like Jim said, our main focus, as far as where we feel we need to go, is to the non-Christian people. If we're going to play Christian concerts, come up. There's nothing wrong with it, although I do feel that there are plenty of bands whose main thing is that. That's cool, as long as they're right before the Lord, I've got no problems with it."

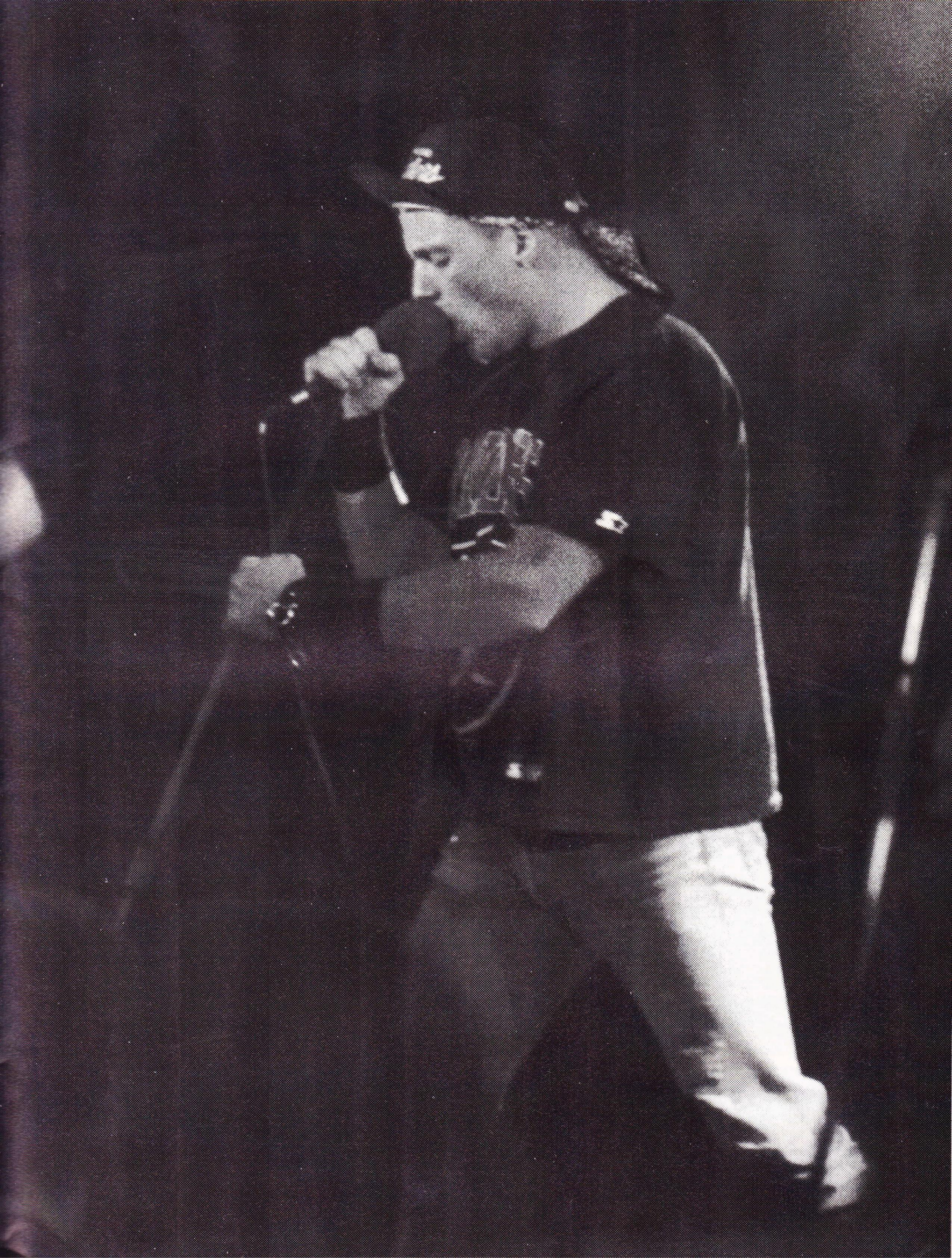
"It's kind of funny to see bands who say they're evangelical," says Jim, "who only play Christian shows."

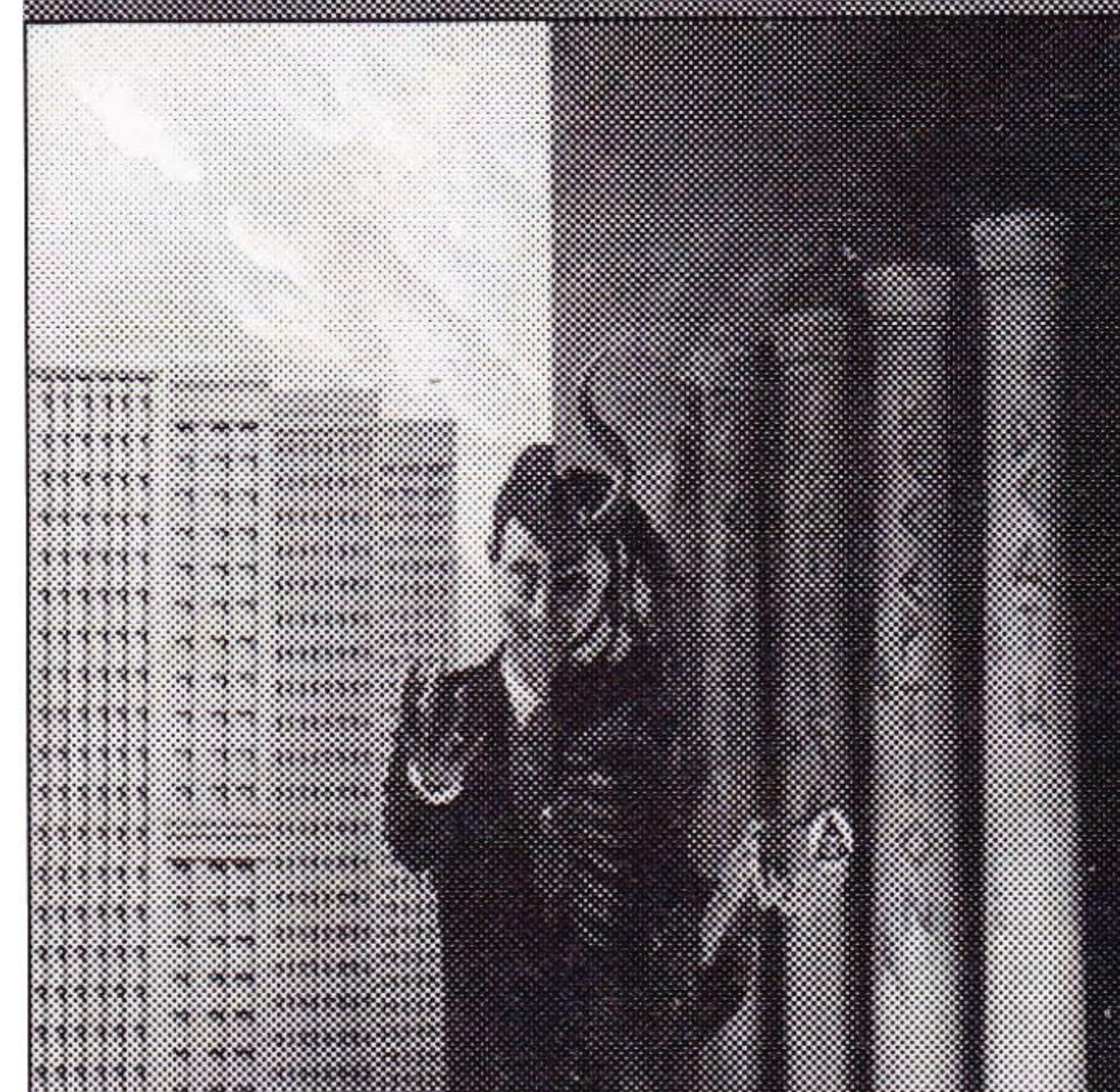
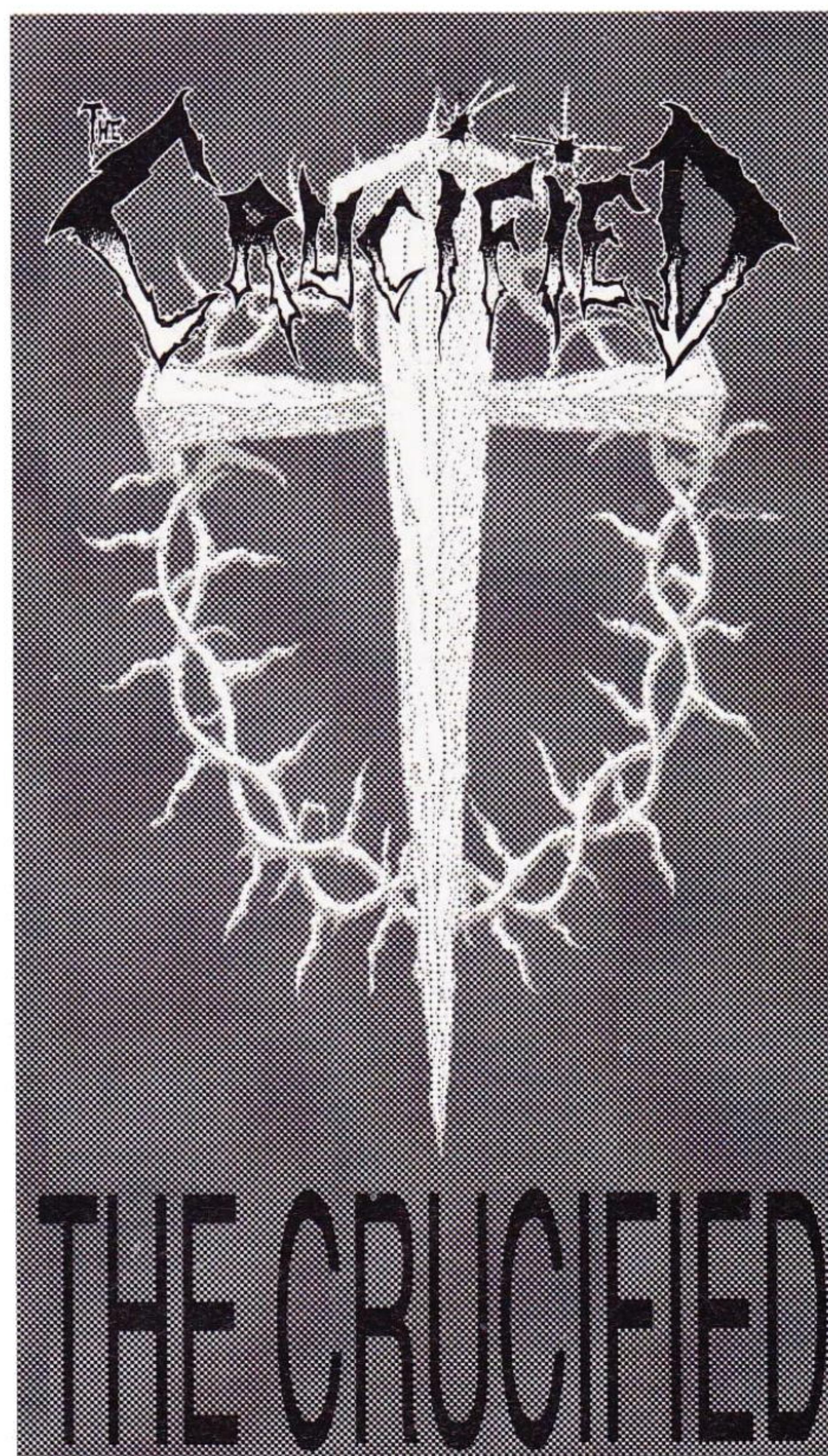
"I don't really understand that," says Mark. "We don't want to be judging people. We don't want to be throwing around our arrogance or whatever. It's not like that. We just don't really understand it. They've got all these songs that talk about becoming a Christian and everything, but you're never gonna see that record in Tower. You're only gonna see it at the local Bible store, and you'll only see 'em in concert at the festival or the local Bible school."

"Not that people don't get saved at those shows," explains Jim. "As far as our situation goes, the most logical thing to do would be to go out to them."

"We would like to be able to hitch on

Mark Salomon Photo by Tom Sundberg





THE PILLARS OF HUMANITY



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with a secular band," adds Mark, "and do shows with them in places where we know it's going to be mostly non-believers and Christians are gonna show up, and that's not bad. It would be great to do that. If God has otherwise, that's cool. Usually my plans and my opinions when they're not of the Lord, they end up blowing up. I'd rather stray away from doing that."

****How have a lot of lost people responded to you guys?**

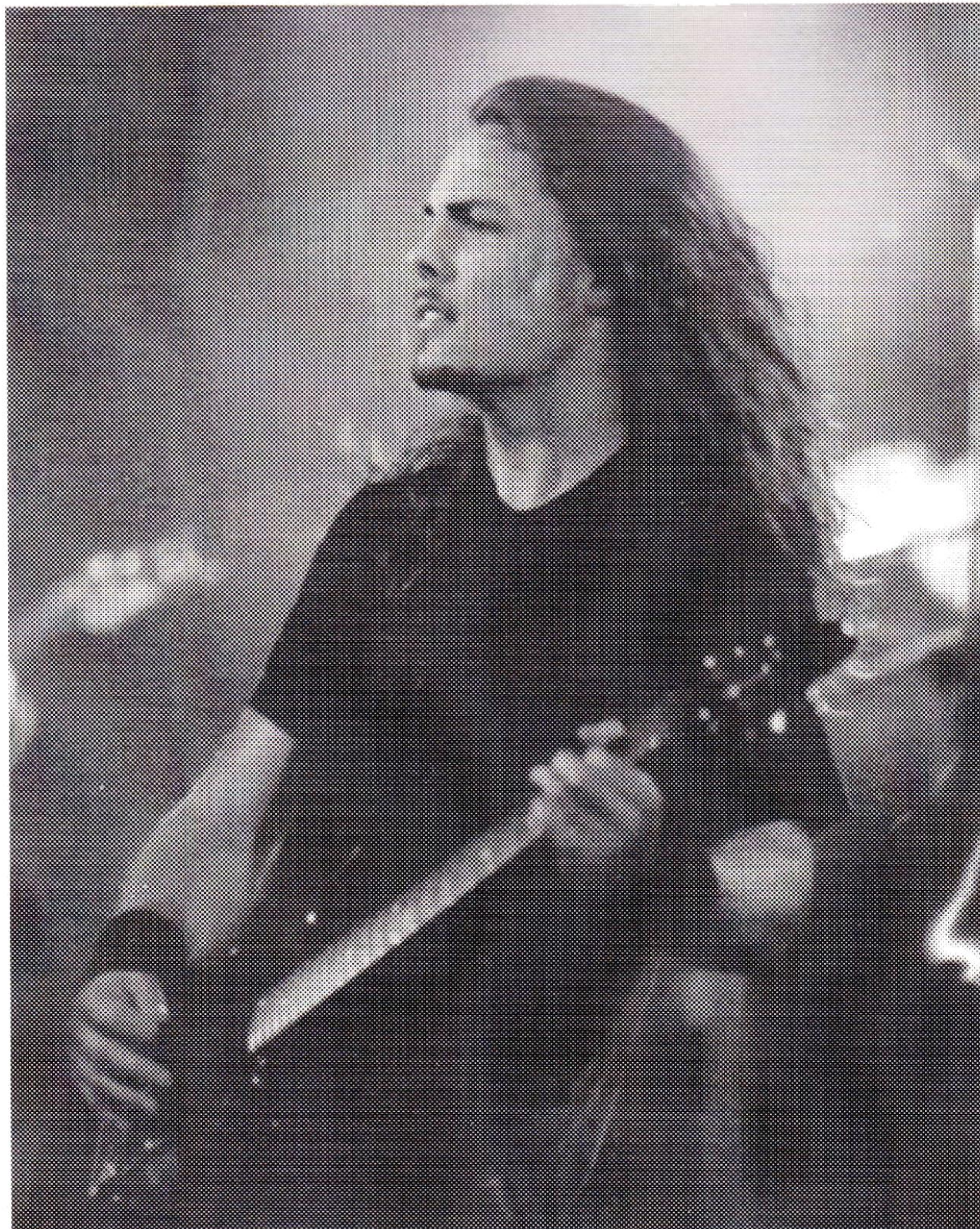
"It's kind of mixed really," answers Mark.

"It's always that way," says Jim. "You get three basic responses: you get people who totally shine you on, who don't even want to listen; you get those who tell you, 'Well that's cool. I respect that;' or you get people who say, 'Hey, I'm interested. I want to know what you're talking about.' There's always those three kinds of people in the crowd. More often we get the second: 'Yeah, I respect that. That's cool for you.' That's when it's good to ask the probing question, 'Can I give you a hand? What about your life?'"

"That's the scariest one too," adds Mark. "You play a concert and you finish playing a song or saying something, and you get a response like nothing. They're not listening. I would much rather get one response or the other. When you get people who are way out there, it's much easier to deal with."

****Yeah, I hate that answer: "That's cool for you."**

"Yeah," continues Mark. "The thing is to be bold in the spirit, and like, 'What do you mean, 'That's cool? What do you think about it?' Try to make 'em think about where they're at, at least. There's absolutely nothing wrong with holding a person to be accountable, for being honest. If they lie, they can go on their way, but if they're honest, that's where the Greg Minier Photo by Tom Sundberg Holy Spirit comes in. He can really minister



Greg Minier Photo by Tom Sundberg

when you're honest. I've yet to talk someone into becoming a Christian, you know what I mean? It's not gonna happen. You can argue all day long."

****Any last words?**

"To all the believers," says Mark, "it doesn't do no good to be pointing people to ourselves. Keep that in mind. You've got to point 'em to Jesus."

"And don't point 'em to The Crucified," adds Jim, "or Believer, or to Vengeance, or Deliverance, or Whitecross or to any bands."

"Or Sandi Patti," says Mark.

"The bands are only tools," says Jim. "Tools. Please, don't idolize us. Don't exchange your worship for Slayer for worship for Vengeance. Idolize Jesus. Make Him your worship, your focus of worship. To me, that would be the one thing I'd encourage the brothers and sisters to do. When they pick up Heaven's Metal, and I say this to myself: 'Read the back page.' How many times have I read the back page? I don't know. I don't think too many times, to tell you the truth, and it's a sad state. I hope that we would be interested in growth, and more interested in Christian growth than who joined this band or what's going on in our lives. So yeah, Doug, we do have a few closing words." **HM**



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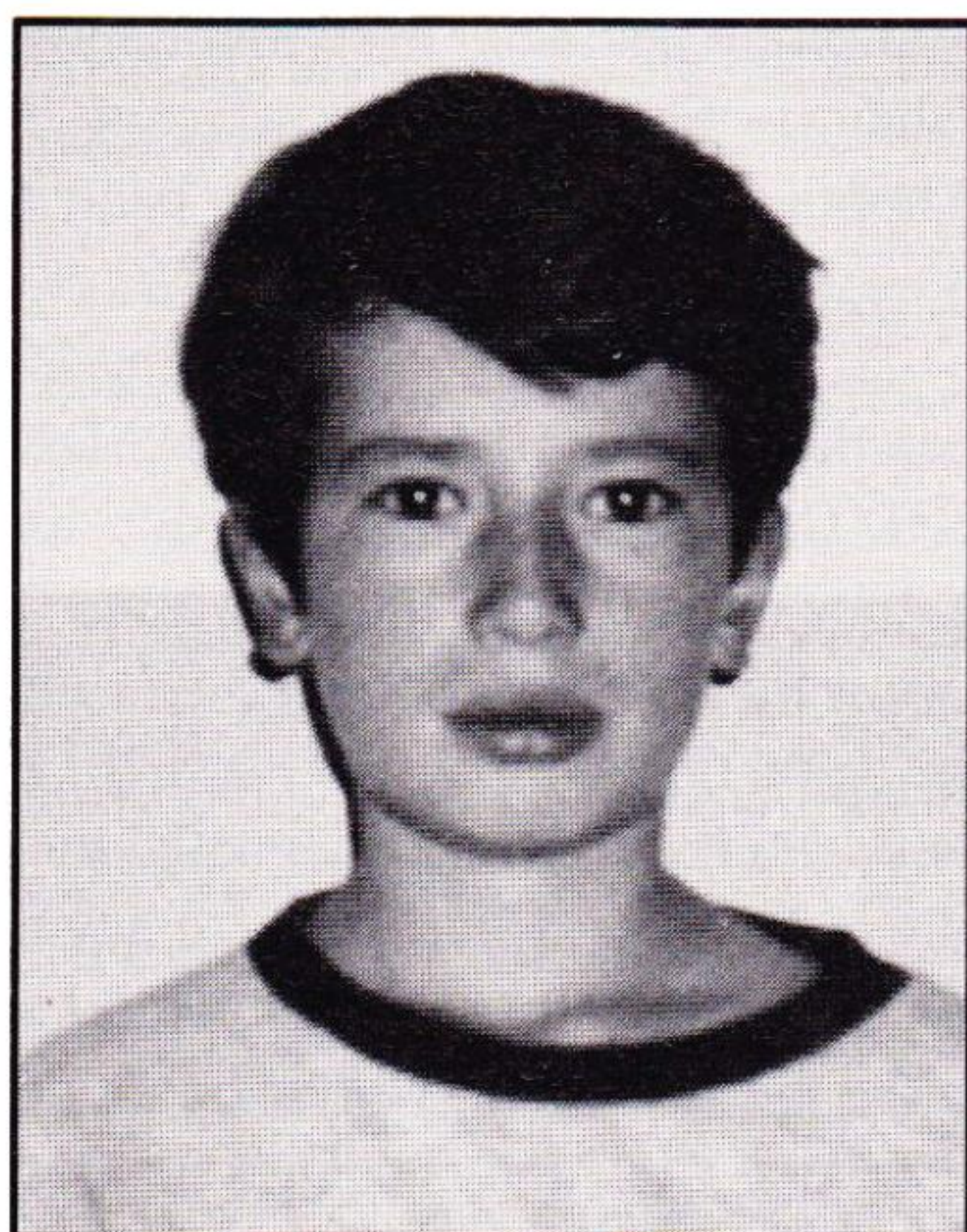
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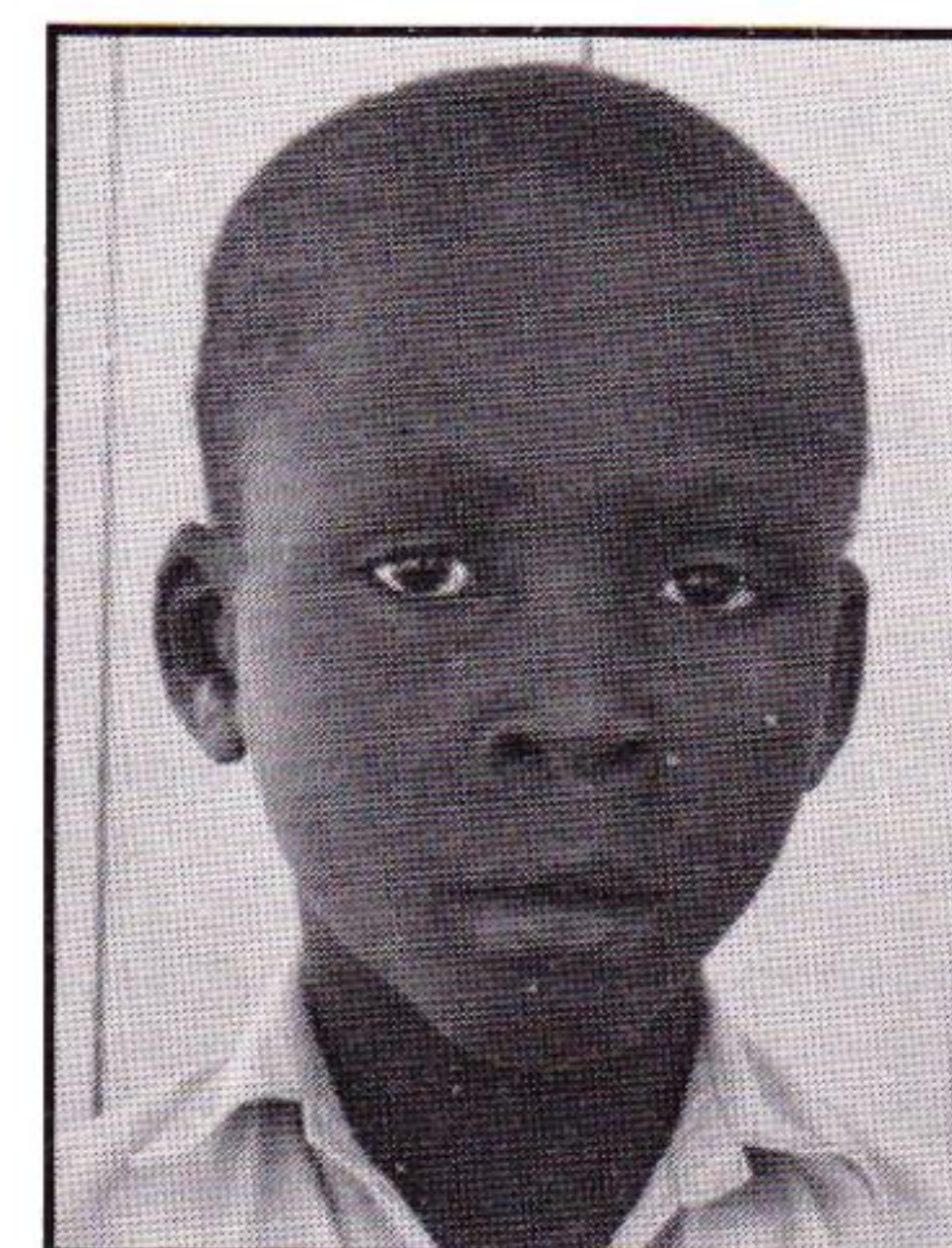
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WC-HM 01/92

KINETIC BRIDE

If there's a "Comeback Of The Year" category in this year's reader's poll, I'm sure Bride would win it (Don't let that influence your vote—Ed). I don't know of many bands, save for Stryper, who have gone through more troubled times than Bride. Praise be to God that Dale and Troy Thompson have persevered and matured. Listen in as Heaven's Metal talks to this talented pair of brothers.

****How do you feel about the upcoming tour with Stryper and Guardian?**

"In the back of our minds we're still wondering if the tour will actually happen," answers Dale, "because we've had so many disappointments. The biggest part of the people who support our ministry have never seen us play, so it's very important for us to go out and promote the 'Kinetic Faith' album and present our ministry the way that God would have us to do it. I spoke briefly with Oz Fox and he seems really excited and pretty much fired up spiritually for this tour. We spoke with Guardian at Cornerstone, and they were like really excited about the tour. There's some definite excitement happening within the three bands, so we'll just have to see how many promoters pick up the tour. They say it would start sometime around October 25th and go a couple of months. It will definitely be longer than we've ever been out. We're preparing both spiritually and mentally, because it's going to take a lot out of us, I'm sure."

****How are you preparing musically for it?**

"We're doing a lot of rehearsing," says Dale. "We played just about every weekend for the last couple of months at different festivals and shows in the Midwest and East coast. We've taken this month off to just concentrate on the set that we'll be playing for the tour. Nobody told us how long we can play. We're estimating somewhere between 25 and 30 minutes for our set. We've been rehearsing that stuff. In October, we're gonna start the 'Metal Mission Tour.' We're going to go out with Novella, and I think Xalt is going to come out and do a few shows with us. We're going to be doing some of that tour during the month of October. We'll get the band functioning musically and see what we need. We'll video tape the shows and sit down and see what we actually need to improve, before we go out before bigger audiences."

****How are you preparing spiritually for it?**

"We've got a Wednesday evening Bible study," answers Dale. "Even if the band can't all get together, we're all making a definite point to make that our evening to set aside to read the Bible and kind of a fellowship thing with our families and stuff. Within the last year we've gotten grounded in a church in Louisville. It's a United Methodist church, and they've supported us whole-heartedly.

"We've also broadened our ministry



Troy, Rick, Dale, and Jerry

to help who I guess you'd call the 'misfits of society.' There's a hospital here for drug and alcohol problems. What we've done is we went in and spoke to the counselors and doctors and asked them if we could go in and present our music to the teenage patients. So, in about two weeks we'll be going in and doing an acoustic set for all the teenagers who come from all types of backgrounds, from attempted suicide to drug, alcohol, and family problems, and abuse. You know, kids that have had a real hard life. Rick, our bass player, is the one who felt the need to branch our ministry out. This is something he thought of getting involved with. After we prayed about it, we decided that we all should get involved in it, not just Rick. So, Rick was the one instrumental in getting us in what I guess you'd call the state hospital for the misfortunate."

****What are some of the big things, both good and bad, that Dale Thompson has been through in the last six years?**

"Ahh, boy, that's a big question. Well, one of the best things that's happened is my wife is expecting our second child. That's really exciting. I'm building a room addition onto the house. As far as the band goes, I guess getting re-signed by the new Pure Metal, and seeing how supportive these guys are and how they go to bat for ya as record executives. You know, with the old Pure Metal, we didn't get a lot of help, as far as having somebody there to counsel the band and advise the band and to direct the band and decision-making. We've always kind of been self-managed, so we didn't have a manager to rely on. With this new Pure Metal, we have guys and gals that are helping us. It's more like a family situation than just a record label and

artists. Certain people at Pure Metal have spent a lot of their own hours, you know, away from office hours, trying to promote the band and help us anyway they can.

"That's really kept us going, because between the albums SILENCE IS MADNESS and END OF THE AGE, we were considering doing some other type of ministry other than what we were involved in, because it didn't seem like the metal music thing was happening at all, and we'd become a little bit stagnated by everything from bad album deals to having to put up with all sorts of craziness that would go on within the industry. But, with people like Jeff Mosely, Mike Kiel, and Dez Dickerson; those guys have really helped the band along as record executives. They gave us a second wind to keep pushing. Now we've got a real solid band. We've got guys that we can rely on and depend on. We're writing better music. Anybody who listens to the new album can definitely see an improvement, as far as songwriting and lyrical structure and tightness of the band. I think that's really what we needed—something positive to happen. Pure Metal was that positive thing that kept us on track with what we were supposed to be doing.

"As far as negative things, I guess just becoming a little burnt out with extreme heavy metal thrash music. It's been the most disappointing thing. We had so many ideas flowing and were still being creative writing... We've got songs on the shelf that are as heavy as anything we ever wrote, as far as thrash and metal, but we just lost the desire to be thrashers. We felt like we needed to find a new groove to fall into. We're real happy with 'Kinetic Faith.' As a matter of fact, it's provoked us recently to write in great depth. We've been writing a lot of

new material that's really cool. It'll probably be a year or so before we ever get back into the studio to release that, but we're real happy, because 'Kinetic Faith' has definitely opened up a whole new avenue for us, as far as writing."

****Are you happy with the production on the album?**

"I guess. There's always things I would do differently. I'm not a producer, but I know what sounds good. I think Steve Griffith definitely made a new sound for us, like the first mix of 'Everybody Knows My Name' and 'Same Ole Sinner.' It took me a while to adjust to the way they sounded, because it was so much different than anything we'd done in the past. After you kind of got used to the way things were mixed and produced, I liked it. I think in the future, though, we're gonna go with less production and less flash. Steve really just gave us what we asked for, as far as his interpretation of what we were asking for. So, if something didn't really jibe with what we were thinking, it was because we didn't explain it to him clear enough. Steve asked us to go out and bring in CD's of bands that we admired or bands that we liked a certain drum sound or a certain guitar sound. We did that. We had all types of music laid out before him and he had plenty of things to choose from. I think that Steve did a real good job with producing and engineering, with what he had to work with at the time."

****What led you guys to become grounded in a church and I assume become accountable?**

"I guess I can really only speak for Troy and myself, because I'm with Troy more than the other guys. Troy and I were raised in a Methodist church, and went to church every Sunday for 12 to 14 years. Then we started going to a Full Gospel Pentecostal church. There I went, like, three times a week to that and two to three different prayer times a week, and I became like a fanatic. I was becoming this Christian spiritual fanatic guy that, you know, I couldn't find any fault in myself. I was finding fault in everybody around me. I guess by the time I turned 20, I was getting pretty well exhausted trying to keep up with everybody's standards. I started going to church less and less, because I just needed a relief from all the religion that I had got. I was a born again Christian, but I had a lot of religion. I was too self-righteous. Many people that are in the church today can't see their self-righteousness. They're too busy pointing at other people. I think I was 16 when I was a licensed minister at an Assemblies Of God church. So, when I decided that God really wanted me in music, I gave up my evangelistic papers and pursued music full-time."

"The whole ordeal involved the recording business and being young and not having anybody to direct us, because we didn't have a church when we first got signed that would support our music. They supported you as a Christian, but they wouldn't support your music. Our first three albums were done just

because we had faith in God, and we were doing it ourselves with virtually no help from the old record company and no help from a church, so it was just whatever faith that we could obtain as children that kept us going—our faith in God, praying, and seeking God. I guess in the last year the band decided, 'Hey, it's time that we get rooted and grounded in a church,' because now we have a record company that we believe is honest, and truthful. They want the best for the band. They are Christians."

"As far as the band goes, we felt like we needed a church all along, but it's like any time you drop out of church it's so hard to get back in. You go and that self-righteousness thing continues. You have to let God kind of chastise ya, put a bridle on ya, because you go to church and you find yourself contradicting the preachers. That's not cool. We as a band decided we needed to get in a church and get this ministry rolling, because we've been holding God up on what He could be doing for us. Now everybody can see it's definitely paying off. The band is right with God, we have a good church, and the band is studying the Bible together. We're wanting to learn as much as we possibly can without becoming fanatical. We want to be able to represent Jesus Christ in a normal human fashion without turning people off."

"For anybody that had their doubts about Bride, hopefully 'Kinetic Faith' will clear up all those misconceptions."

"Like I said earlier, it's like it definitely paid off. We have the Stryper tour, we're going to Brazil in February, and we've got more shows than we know what to do with. God is opening up the door now to where we can go out and play and minister, because we are ready to minister as a band. Oddly enough, we had two number one songs, which is so unheard of for Bride. It's like we ruled the underground for so long, as far as a heavy metal band. We were the 'taboo band.' The band that mothers said, 'Don't let your children listen to... You can listen to anybody else, but don't listen to Bride.' And now the same people are saying, 'Hey, go out and buy Bride albums. 'Kinetic Faith' I think is just a really powerful album. It was written because of the letters that we've gotten from kids and just personal experiences that we've experienced while we were trying to get, not so much back to God, but back to discipline that we needed in order to be a successful Christian band."

****How has the festival tours this summer been for ya?**

"They've been really cool," answers Troy, as he takes over the phone from Dale. "Most of the ones we went to were sponsored by Star Song/Pure Metal. They really did a good job of getting us out there. We were real appreciative. They got us into the festivals that we otherwise wouldn't have been able to get into. We had a great chance to minister to hundreds and hundreds of people. It really turned out great

for us. What we would try to do is take a mailing list with us, and we try to do follow-up letters through our mailing list. We got some really good response from the festivals. Celebration went really well for us. At Cornerstone we did our acoustic set, which was really fun. We actually got a chance to do the new version of 'Sweet Louise' and some of our milder stuff, which I really like to do when we can."

****How did you get involved with Dale's music?**

"We started off playing music when I was seven and Dale was nine. We were called 'The Hillgy Lads' and I played the violin and Dale played the guitar. We had two cousins in the band, and we went around from church to church and sang old Southern Gospel tunes. I played violin and cello all throughout high school and stuff like that. Me and Dale didn't play music, except like when we'd meet in church when he was an evangelist, and I'd fill in on guitar for him or whatever. After listening to Rez Band, Dale got linked up with a local Christian musician named Billy Sutherland, who already knew how to play rock and roll. He kind of showed Dale the basics. Dale played with him for a year and said, 'Well, I've learned enough.' He wouldn't let Dale sing. They didn't think he could sing rock at the time. Dale said, 'Well, I want to sing now,' so he broke off with them and we formed the band Matrix in '83. We've been at this for years and years now."

****So, when he started playing music, you were just right there with him, huh?**

"Yeah, basically. Our father played music. What would happen is he and his three other brothers would all get together and they would sit around and play guitar, mandolin, and violin. They would all sit around and, of course, us kids would hang up in the wings and help 'em sing and stuff. We were raised in this atmosphere. They was doin' Bluegrass, Southern Gospel-type stuff. That's what we grew up on, so we're pretty well versed with all the hymns you could think of."

****How do you get the guitar tone that you get?**

"It's an old tube sound that basically came from like an old Fender-type amplifier. I got away from using real hot pickups for my guitar and tried to go with more of a hollow body sound, something a little more raw and a little more aggressive. I really like that a lot better. I used to play like the Charvel copies and wear 'em like right underneath my neck. You know, everybody went through that 'Yngwie stage.' We all want to play as fast as we can. Then I realized, 'Shoot, you can really say more with one note than you can with 50.' It gets real annoying for me these days to go to a concert and hear a guitarist rip off every single scale that they know as fast as they can. There's no feeling. That's what I'm trying to shoot for these days, even if I play the same lead in every single song,

(laughs) at least it's going to have feeling. It's not like I've memorized 13 scales and 14 different patterns for doing it, and I know all these modes, you know, which I do, but I don't play any."

**What's a few of your favorite Bride songs, and why?

"Actually, one of 'em is not on this album. It's 'I Miss The Rain.' I wish we could've recorded that. It's a ballad. I really like that song. I like 'Troubled Times' an awful lot. Of course, I really like 'Everybody Knows My Name' and 'Same Ole Sinner.' I'm more into the groove style of music. I was trying to pull us out of this thrash stuff for a long time. When I look back and I see songs like 'Heroes' and 'All Hollows Eve,' I'm not ashamed I played those songs. I think they're still pretty cool for what they were, but I'm totally convinced that every song has to have a chorus that's sing-able by the average Joe on the street. In order to make the song more accessible, to get your ministry out, to make it stick in people's minds.

"That's something that I always refer back to the Eagles for. You can be driving down the road in your car singing an Eagles song and not even realize what you're saying, but you know every single word. Their leads are all so tasteful, you can hum every single lead. That's just how tasteful that band was. I don't want to do Eagles music, but I'd like to have the catches, the taste that they did with their music.

"Before we changed our style, it seemed like everybody was playing extreme thrash or everybody was playing Amy Grant-

style music. Both styles have different kinds of places. Both of 'em are good. I'm not ragging on anybody by any means, but nobody was playing rock and roll. For those kids who are into Guns 'N' Roses, Aerosmith, Sound Garden, Alice In Chains-type music, what Christian band could they listen to that would minister to 'em? It just seemed like nobody was doing it at the time, so we said, 'Hey, it's time to bring out a Zeppelin-type of sound.'

"We had already started writing that. It wasn't a real conscious decision. 'Everybody Knows My Name' and 'Same Ole Sinner' kind of started going towards that vein anyway. I'm hoping that we're filling a niche in the Christian market that will help some kids out, so they don't feel like they have to listen to the Guns 'N' Roses tape or whatever. We're giving them an alternative, because we're not Petra, and we're not Vengeance. I'm hoping that we're somewhere in between. It seemed like there was enough thrash bands in the market, that everyone who liked thrash had enough to listen to. We were shooting for a groove sound, and I think with 'Kinetic Faith,' I think we definitely hit on it. Our new stuff is actually much better than the 'Kinetic Faith' material, so we're excited about rehearsing our new stuff these days too."

**Why don't you fill me in on the personnel in the band now?

"Yeah, it seems like we finally have a lineup that we're very, very comfortable with. Jerry McBroom is our drummer now. Jerry is the number one reason why we got to escape our

thrash, because he's a real groove-oriented drummer. He doesn't use a double bass or double kick pedal. Everything is just really tight and really groovin.' Rick Foley is playing bass for us, and Rick and Jerry lock in together extremely well. They hold the bottom end down really tight. I think it shows a little more in concert, because, like on the album, there's so many instruments going on sometimes, you kind of lose the groove sometimes, I think. Then, of course, I'm playing guitar, lead and rhythm, and Dale is singing. Sometimes Dale occasionally brings out a tambourine.

"We're real pleased with the lineup. One of the things we're doing these days is we try to play with a click-track in concert. We don't do backing tracks of any kind, but it makes the band so incredibly tight when we play. You know, you're very consistent throughout the whole tune. We had to play a couple of shows recently without it, and you can tell a big difference, because you do a song like 'Kiss The Train,' which is steaming, and go into 'Young Love,' and you have a tendency to play 'Young Love' very fast. When you're using click, you set it to the same tempo that was on the album. That's what people are used to hearing it at. They don't hear it twenty beats faster a minute. That reminds me of a lot of bar bands that you see. They'll do a version of

Aerosmith or something and they'll play it four keys higher or lower, and then the tempo's way off. That doesn't even make sense."

BRIDE continued on page 16

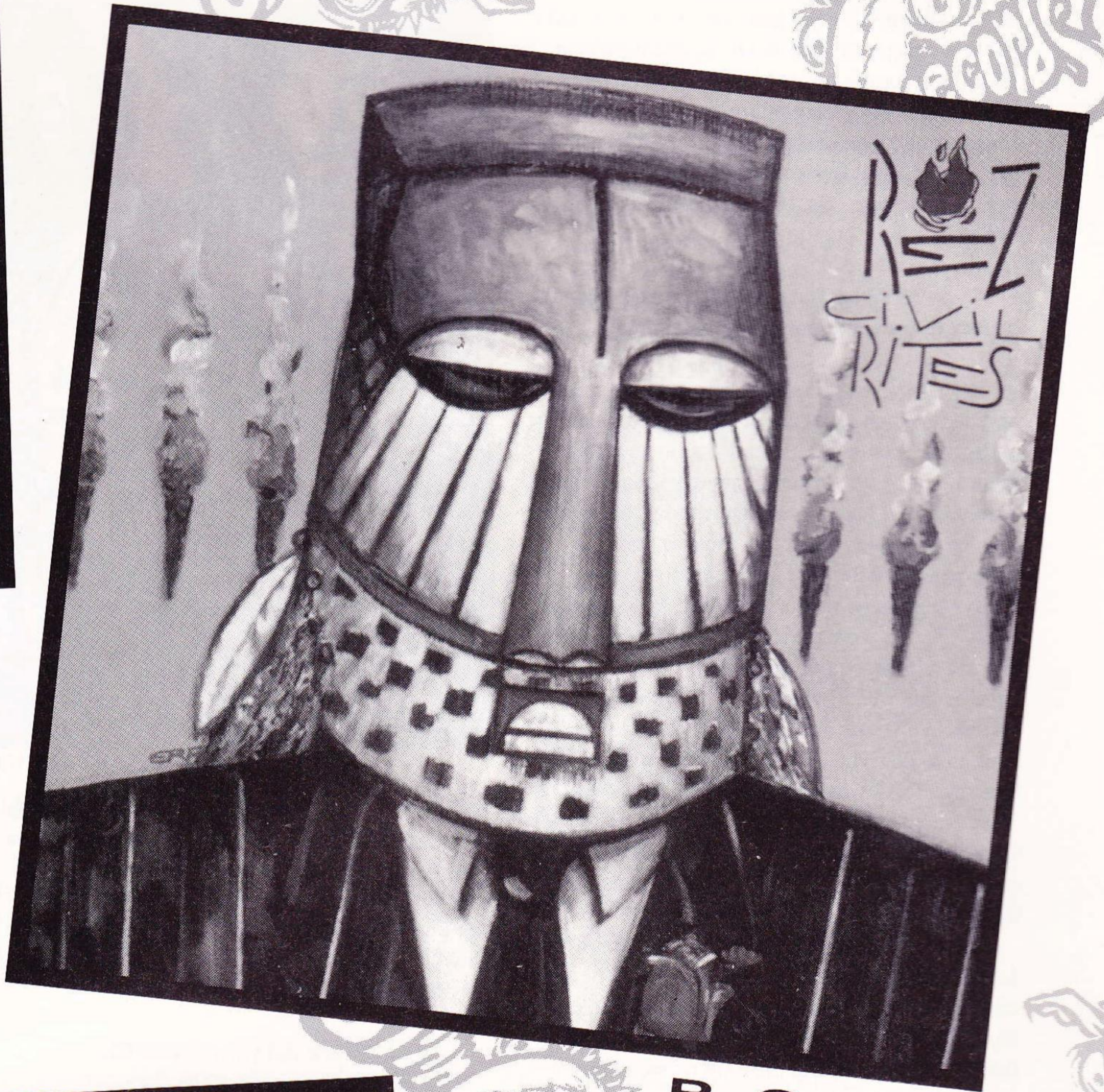


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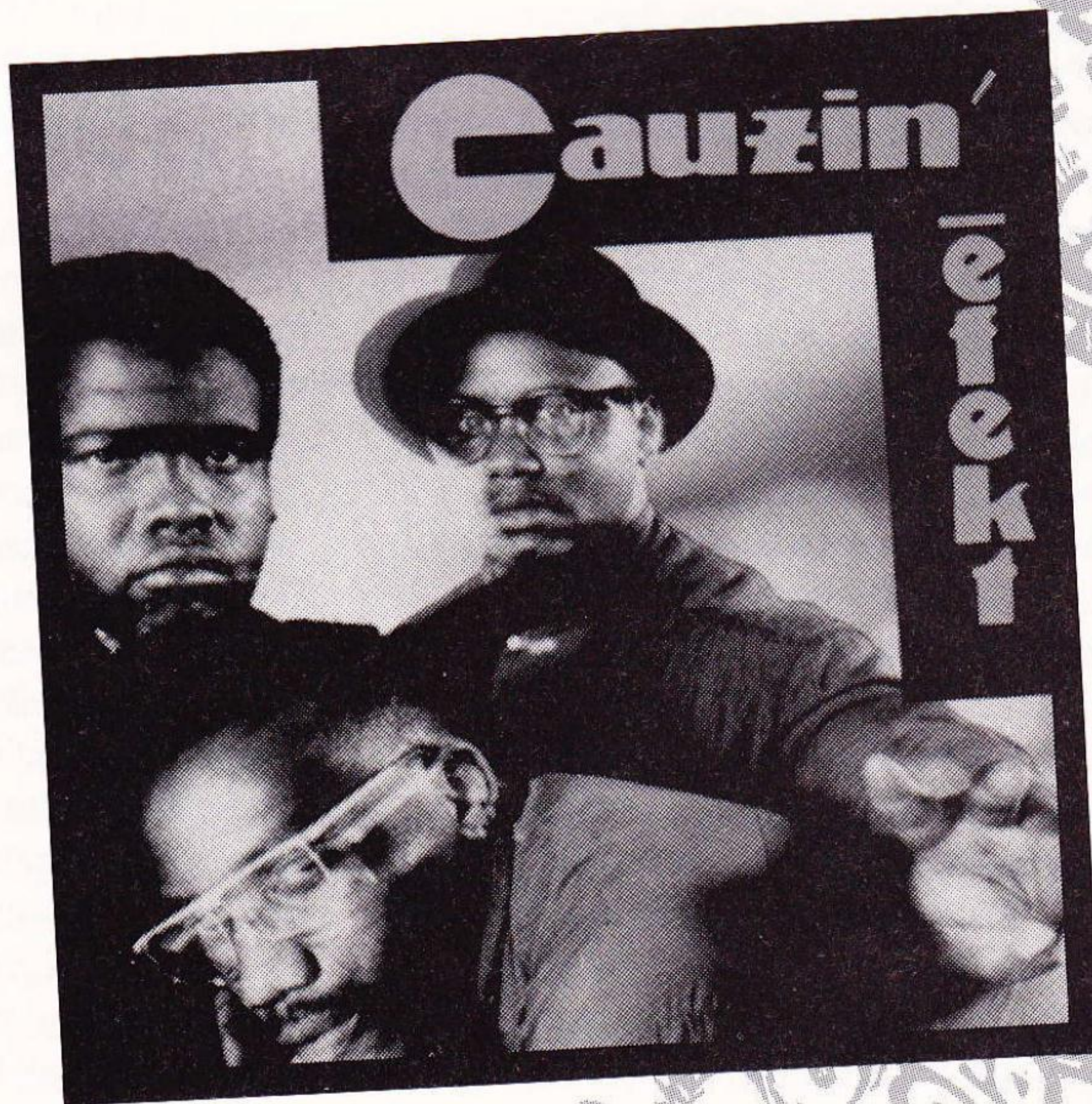


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JUST UNLEASHED (AND ROAMING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD!)

NO HYPE, STRIPES, OR STEROTYPES

Stryper: The name is a rock 'n' roll household word. Has success spoiled the yellow and black attack? How about the other spectrum of low album sales and low concert attendance? What are these guys up to know, and what's on their mind for the future? With every member of the band but one being interviewed numerous times among these pages, this is the first time vocalist Michael Sweet has had the interviewee microphone here. So, let's see what Mike has to say.

****Why don't you give me a personal history of some of your musical training?**

"I guess it starts back with my mom and dad. When I was about 12 I played guitar on a 16-track session with them. As far as actual recording and real professional experience, that would be it. I had played talent shows before that, but I wouldn't consider those actual experiences. After that I started playing the Hollywood scene with my brother, Robert, when I was 13. We were playing clubs every weekend. We did a demo on our own when I was 14 and another one when I was 17. I really took music serious at a young age and knew exactly what I wanted to do. The only way I can explain it is, 'it was my life.' I was writing songs when I was 12. They weren't that good, but I was trying. Stryper formed when I was about 19. We did our first record when I was 21. We've done six records, and I've produced a couple other bands.

"I've been getting into production lately whenever I have time. I don't want to take away from Stryper, but I really love producing. I have a lot of fun turning knobs and making things sound good, and creating music. I'm always looking for a new group to produce. It's just that not a lot of people know that I'm into producing, and I don't have a reputation as a producer, you know what I mean? So, I'm trying to build that reputation, cause it's something that I really want to do full-time in the future."

****Being from a musical family, you probably picked up a guitar as soon as you could walk...**

"Well, pretty much. My dad showed me my first three chords, which is what you need to play rock and roll. He showed me those when I was about six or seven. I started coming up with lyrics and stuff when I was just a kid. The lyrics made no sense at all. Music's my life. That's all I've ever known, that's all I've been around. My parents, that's all I ever saw them do, was writing. That's just the way it's always been."

****Did you have kind of a normal high school experience, or was music...**

"Music definitely outweighed the school experience, definitely. I did okay in school. I went to three different high schools. We moved a lot. I was in a band throughout high school, so I was always trying to connive and figure out some way to make my music work



Photo by Bob Sebree

with high school. Somehow, some way I worked it out where I actually got credits for being in the band. It was like my music class. I don't know how that happened, but it did. We played the school a lot. We played the Sadie Hawkins, and lunch time quite a few times. I was really into it during that period as well."

****How did you come to Christ?**

"Well, back when I was about 11 or 12 years old, Robert, who was three years older than me, was really getting into Jimmy Swaggart years ago. He was watching him all the time. Anytime he was on, he was watching him. Jimmy Swaggart was really with it. He was really speaking to him. Bob kind of got me into watching it, my mom and dad into watching it, and the whole family into watching it. Then, after that, we decided we were gonna join a church. One night, in front of the tv, we all accepted Christ. We all joined a church and started going. From that point on, it was something that became more and more a part of our lives. We grew and grew as Christians, and just really developed a relationship with Christ.

"There was a period in time, between about the age of 15 to 19, that we backslid, heavily. To the point to where we were doing things and still thinking that we were Christians, or still believing that we were living a good, decent Christian life, yet we were complete heathens. We were out on the Hollywood strip, playing the clubs, scamming on women, drinking alcohol, not really heavily into drugs, but we were just complete heathens. We were living a lie, man. That turned around and Stryper formed. I think you already know the story about our buddy, Ken Metcalf, came and told us we needed to change our lives. That's what happened.

"I'm a firm believer in the fact that when you accept Christ, you can never get away from Him (laughs), ya know. Even though many times your flesh wants to, and you wanna go and do things that aren't godly, His Spirit never leaves. He's always there, tugging at your heart. That's what the deal was with us—He never left."

****As the last year has gone by, how have you felt?**

"Why don't we say the last two years? I feel like I've gone through a lot of valleys. On the Real Videos interview, Robert had mentioned that he felt he'd gone through a lot of valleys from day one. That's not how I feel. My valleys the last two years have been much more extreme than they were four or five years ago. A lot more struggles, a lot more temptation...just a weird feeling. I could feel a state of falling from grace almost, right around the corner, you know what I mean? I could just sense that I was heading for a pit, that I was definitely growing closer and closer to backsliding from God again. I could just feel that, with the things I was doing, not praying like I should be, not reading the Word like I should be, just all that kind of stuff.

"This band was basically on a shelf for a whole year, with our record company going bankrupt. I think it was for a reason. I think it was a period for us to pull our thoughts together and come to the realization that our vision and our goal and our calling is to go and tell people about Christ through our music. I think our eyes were open to that again. We all woke up. When you have a band for seven years and you're touring and stuff and you get caught up in this world and the things of this world, and being in a rock band, it's so easy to be on and off, on and off for Christ. It's tough. I'm not using that as an

excuse or anything, but boy it really is tough. We did it for so long we had to make it fresh again. We had to physically start from scratch, and that's what we're doing. We're starting from scratch. We've got new management, a new label, and we've got kind of a new look. We dropped the yellow and black.

"The AGAINST THE LAW record, I like it a lot. I think it's a good record, yet I don't hear as much of an anointing on it that I want to hear. I think that's the problem with that record. I think it's a really good record, but I think that when we were making it that was the period that I just explained to you. Where I felt I was going through valleys, and felt the other guys were as well. I don't think we were including God as much as we should've been while we were making the record. If you listen to SOLDIERS UNDER COMMAND, I mean, God was the fifth member on that record, and I think you hear it. If you put that record on you can hear an anointing. There's a certain energy that's in that music. It's hard for me to explain, but it's there. We're just trying to get that back. We're going to do a new record. It's neat to see what's going on."

**Is there anything else you think God may have been trying to tell you during that period of time?

"I think the one and only thing God was trying to tell us, and still is trying to tell us, is 'focus on Him only, not to get caught up in the things that mean nothing.' Not to get caught up in how big the stage is, and how much money there is to be made, and how many people we can pull to our shows, and how many clothes to have. Not to get caught up in this stuff that really means nothing. If we get caught up in God, and believe and have faith that God can do anything, He'll do it. He'll do it, without us sitting around worrying about everything."

**How can someone else avoid going through what you've gone through?

"Well, I can't say that for sure, that they can avoid it, because I think everyone goes through it. I think that's just what being a Christian is all about, is going through trials and tribulations, and tough times. The more rooted and grounded you are, and the more that you try to seek God and try to include him in your life on a day to day basis, such as praying or asking His opinion, or asking for His help, or when you're tempted or something, going to the Bible and reading something to help pull you out of it. I think if more people were to do that, myself included, they'd pull through it a lot easier. I really do. That's the tough part. Many times a lot of us try to do it on our own. It doesn't work. We have our flesh that we have to battle with. It's really tough. We have Satan plaguing us. We have to do battle with him as well. We can't do it on our own, we just can't. I have a tendency to forget that: forgetting that I need to include God, and thinking that I can do it on my own."

**Typical human nature.

"It just is, and I think it's really that way with anyone, but...I already told you what I think the solution is."

**Tell us about your future album, beyond the greatest hits compilation.

"I don't even know. I couldn't even tell ya. We haven't even spoke about it, or thought about it, or had time to think about it. I'm praying and hoping...and the direction that I want to go in is lyrically a very bold direction, a very strong oriented message, but are somehow done in a way that no one gets turned off and they can relate. Like, you know the Gloria Esteffon song, 'Coming Out Of The Dark?' She's Gloria Esteffon. She's already accepted by the world, but everyone related to those lyrics. M.C. Hammer's 'Pray.' Everyone can relate to those. It's neat. I don't even know if they're Christians or not, but their

"I could just sense that I was heading for a pit...not praying or reading the Word like I should be."

lyrics are very positive, and have a very strong message, yet people relate to them. I don't want to push people off or turn 'em off in any way. I want to have a strong message, stronger than AGAINST THE LAW.

"Musically, I'd like to definitely incorporate some more pop, not wimpy pop, but more of a melodic sound. One of my favorite songs off AGAINST THE LAW is 'All For One.' I don't know why, but I'm more into that stuff. I like the heavy stuff. I get a kick out of playing it, but I'm less into it. I'm not talking about 'Soldiers Under Command.' I like that kind of heavy. To me, that's very melodic heavy. I'm basically talking about the very raunchy, fast, screaming stuff (ya-na-na-na-nuh). I'm just not into it that much. A lot of people are, I guess. I think on the next record hopefully we'll be doing more of the old Stryper style and mixing it with the new style."

**Is this tour with Guardian and Bride gonna happen? How'd that come about?

"Yeah, it is. We just decided we wanted to go out there and do a Christian tour and hit the Christian market and attract the Christian people, so they can come to our shows and we can let them know that we mean business, and we are believers, and we mean what we say. We'd like for them, if they're not gonna support us, to at least pray for us and be behind us. So, it's a chance for us to kind of explain ourselves to them, because so many Christians don't support Stryper right now, and they don't know what to think of Stryper. A lot of 'em think that we're hypocrites and that we're

not Christians at all. It's a chance for us to talk to them."

**Why don't you explain a little bit about the whole Enigma thing? Have you lost all your future royalties from past releases?

"The royalties are still coming in. Because the record company folded, we moved over to Hollywood Records. They bought up our old catalog, so any royalties that need to come in will now come through Hollywood. So, we'll still get royalties. The only problem is, and what really hurt us a lot, is because of this we were basically 'on hold' for about a year. We didn't do anything. We should've continued to tour. Probably, we should've done a new record by now. It just didn't work out. Enigma had a lot of good points to 'em. They did a lot of good things for us, and they did a lot of bad things for us. I don't mean to bad rap anyone, but the truth is the truth. They blew it in a lot of ways for the band Stryper. In many ways, they did a lot of good things. They had a lot of good people working for 'em. One of the things they blew it in was the fact that they constantly changed lineups, as far as people working for them. Their staff was constantly changing. They'd have someone great in publicity, like this guy named Rick Orienza got us in Time and all this stuff, and then he's gone. It was really frustrating. They just couldn't get their act together with the people working for them or who they wanted to work for them. It was weird. They are no more. They folded."

**I wondered about that, because when a company goes bankrupt, it means they don't have to pay back their debts.

"There's always money somewhere. They're being audited right now by a some group that didn't sell any records at all, and come to find out, Enigma owes them about \$100,000. They're gonna be audited by Stryper. We have this feeling down deep inside that they owe us a lot of money. We just have this feeling about this, that they could possibly owe us anywhere from \$500,000 to a million dollars. We felt through the years that money was always being held back. We just felt it. We had this feeling about it. Sure enough, it's coming to the surface now that they owe a lot of people money. We're gonna get to the bottom of it and see what happens. Like you said, it's hard to get money from someone or something that doesn't have money. When you're bankrupt, you're bankrupt."

**Have you guys been able to support yourselves okay during the last year or so?

"We've been getting by. We've been doing good. My wife and I put a lot of money into our home, and put a lot of money into the government, so we get a lot of money back. We've been doing alright. My wife works. She's a makeup artist. She does commercials, so that really helps. As far as the other guys, so far as I hear, they're all surviving and gettin' by." **HM**

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Christian owned and operated radio and television stations, are still just a dream for a lot of us. Many have not heard the gospel, let alone 'heavenly metal'. There are, however, possibilities to have, short, one or two hour programs aired on some stations. This is good news for bands and fans alike, because of our work on an internationally syndicated metal show called, "Stainless Steel". It is our hope to reach many people for the Lord, through this series of programs. Feel free to make any submissions in writing, or taped, including music for consideration. Sponsors are welcome to apply. If you would like to have this show aired in your area, you can help accomplish this by writing us and letting us know. We'll do our best to bring it to you. Shirts are \$10.99 + 2 s/h.

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BRIDE continued:

**Have you and Dale gotten along all the years you've done Bride?

"Oh yeah. Actually it's kind of a unique relationship, because we always manage to write very well together. Dale always does the lyrics, and he'll come up with some sort of melody or an idea for the song, and I'll take that idea and try to refine it to a musical format. Our writing throughout the years has always come really easy for us. We've written original music since the early 80's. We've been doing it together a long time. He lives next door, so we see each other quite a bit outside of rehearsal. Hopefully I'm through shingling and putting up walls or crawling underneath a house to run wire... Hopefully that'll be over with soon."

**One thing you guys do, which is kind of unique, probably because you haven't tried to go big time and be on the road a long time, but apparently you guys have been very good at interacting with your fans, actually writing them letters and maybe calling them. I think a lot of bands don't do that kind of stuff, because they're so busy and tied up.

"I think that's the reason we should be playing music: to cater to the needs of those that need us. To say that you don't have time... It's very apparent in life, especially in business, that you make time for those things you deem important. You can make the time to do this or that, play tennis or racquetball. You actually make time to do what you want, so we have to make time to answer all of our mail. Recently Dale and I have been sitting down one day a week, usually it's Sunday afternoon, and we just answer all the mail and get it done with. It takes several hours, and we normally have people helping us addressing envelopes and things like that. You just kind of get it done. The letters that come in, some of them are very moving. It makes it worth your while to read your mail.

"It bothers me when bands have a rock star complex. Before a show, sometimes I'm fatigued or whatever, but I always go out and talk to the crowd, however few they may be (laughs). I always go out, not talking to them through a metal grate, or behind a door. I go out and talk to 'em. When we get time to spend with them, we like to interact with them. Whatever they have going. If they have a frisbee, we'll fly it with 'em. After the shows we make ourselves extremely accessible. Of course, one of the main things you do after your show is sell your merchandise, so you can pay for your way back home. You've got to hang out behind the table, but you always get those people that have those personal questions. It's really easy for them to pull you off to the side and talk to ya, and the whole band's accessible. We don't hide after a show. We don't hide before a show. It bugs me when I see bands get that rock star complex."

**Is there anything that the Heaven's Metal readers can pray for ya?

"Yeah," responds Dale, "that we can actually meet the goals that we're trying to set for ourselves. We'd like to play music full-time. We want to get our ministry out to as many people as possible, because we feel like we have a lot to say to those people, you know, the misfits. It's incredible how many letters we've gotten over the songs 'Ever Fallen In Love' and 'Young Love.' It's just amazing. These kids are having relationship problems. I don't know. Maybe other bands are addressing it, but I don't know, I think we addressed it a different way with those songs. We've got a great response over those two tunes. We've been getting some phone calls. People have been convicted, because they're either living with someone and they're not married, and all kinds of things. It's real encouraging to know that the fruits of our labor is being shown to us. I think that's really cool. So, they could just pray that we could meet our goals and get this ministry out there to the people that really need it. I think that would be cool."

**Do you have anything else to comment on?

"I guess anybody that's not familiar with Bride, go out and buy 'Kinetic Faith' and give it a listen and see if it's something that they'd like more of. I don't know, I think we've covered a lot of ground in this interview between me and Troy. For anybody that had their doubts about any activity that Bride or our ministry, hopefully 'Kinetic Faith' will clear up all those misconceptions. The people that wouldn't buy our albums before will realize that Bride is on the right track and that Jesus Christ is the reason that we're playing music for."

**Do you feel like you've grown up in a lot of ways, maybe learned from some mistakes or through the past five or six years?

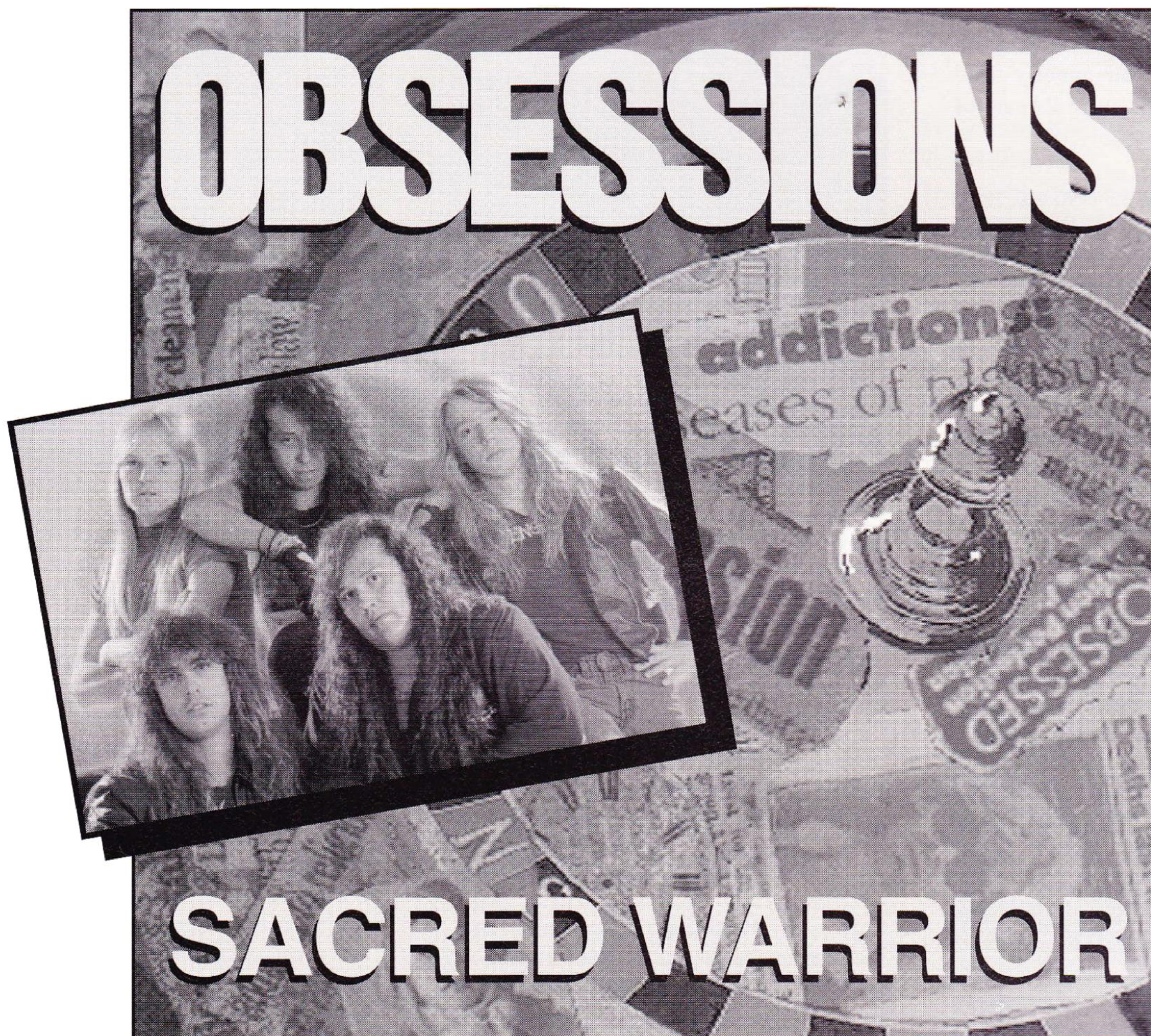
"Yeah, I think that we're definitely a lot more disciplined as Christians, a lot less hostile, and any of that so-called 'Christian bad-boy' image that we had acquired either through the press or however we acquired, however people would define it... I'd just like the people to see that we are a very positive band, a very up band. We're not promoting our talents or our gifts, but we're using those gifts to promote Jesus Christ. For one thing, I guess growing up you learn a lot of love. You learn more about God, and as you learn more about God, you learn more about love. It definitely makes for a more compassionate band. I find myself going into deep conversations with people that I would have normally just kind of gave a little advice to and shunned off, because I didn't want to understand their problems. But now I find myself more open to people's concerns and problems. I guess it's a thing of maturing as a Christian and a musician and as a minister." **HM**



OB•SES•SIONS

(əb-sĕsh'ənz) n. 1. Compulsive preoccupation with a fixed idea or feeling.

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XALTING JESUS

One morning Jim Erdman of Xalt and I decided to do an interview for Heaven's Metal. So, at approximately 9:00 a.m., which is an ungodly hour for a musician to be awake, we made contact. After a prayer for the interview, Jim announced, "Oh, boy, I haven't even had my coffee yet." So, before he could inject his body with artificial stimulants, the interview was underway.

****Last year you saw 1,000 people come to the Lord through your ministry. How did that make you feel, and where did most of that happen? What was it like?**

"Well, the goal for 1990 was 1,000 kids. When we prayed and met at the beginning of the year, I really felt that God had put on my heart that was what was going to happen. God put it upon my heart how to go about that, and we followed those steps and did what we could. We prayed and fasted. By the end of the year... I sound like a missionary, trying to get quotas (chuckles), but the final count was somewhere around 1800 to 1900. That was above and beyond what we expected. We just praise God for it. A lot of that happened early in the year, just being out on the road playing and ministering to kids. People were coming forward and giving their lives to Christ. We would do follow-up and try to disciple. Discipling from a distance is pretty hard, but we try to put that in motion by working with their youth groups and that kind of thing. Trying to get the churches in the area to take responsibility for these kids.

"Then, when we went to Central America, about 1,000 kids came to the Lord during that time. I would say that, right now, Randy and I sat down and talked about it, and estimated that about 3,000 kids total have come forward, but we take into account the fall-back rate. We know that right now a lot of the larger ministries only have a four to five percent retention rate, as far as people who give their life to the Lord in big rallies and maybe a year or two years later are kind of right back to where they were before they came. We think that's due to a lack of follow-up. In all estimates it's been about 3,000 people who have come forward, but we know that the people that we've been able to...the groups that we've been able to work with come to around 1,900 kids. So that's the number we're sticking with. We could try to inflate the number I guess, to appear to be something maybe we're not, but we like to be realistic. We pray that all those people are in the kingdom."

****What are your goals with Xalt and music? Both long-term and short-term.**

"The long-term goal is pretty much an entire vision the Lord gave me when I started the band. I won't say it was like a five-year plan or anything, but it was kinda like I saw exactly what God wanted to do in the ministry, and if I was to be obedient these things would happen. One of the things in the long-term is to establish a world-



Randy, Jim and Scott

wide ministry, where at one point we would be sending out missionary support from our ministry. We would be able to help finance other ministries. We would be able to help encourage other musicians who want to get into the service of ministering.

"I'm a Christian who happens to be a musician. It's not the other way around."

"When I say the 'service' of ministering, I mean exactly that. Our goal isn't to go out and be rock stars. That's never been the purpose. The music is kind of a means to the end, if I might use that. I'm a Christian who happens to be a musician. It's not the other way around. The guys in the band, we're all united in that same vision and it helps work. So, long-term we'd like to establish a world-wide ministry through music that would help bring people into the kingdom. Obviously establishing a secular presence is a part of that vision, but right now we're just being obedient to what God has called us to do and staying in the Christian music field. We'll always be in the Christian music field, but I believe that later on God has His hand in establishing Christian music to the world. I don't know exactly how it's going to happen. I wish I could tell ya, but I don't know.

"The short-term is simply being obedient and playing as many concerts as possible and be more accountable to our home church, try to stay home a little more. Maybe let the records have time to penetrate the market a little more before we go on tour. Right now we try to stay out as much as we can."

****How has having a producer on your record helped or changed things for ya?**

"Ha, ha. It's made all the difference in the world. When you're the guitar player in the band, the principle music writer, and when you're close to your own music, it's really hard to guide your own ship, unless you have that kind of objectivity where you can step back. I believe very few musicians actually possess that kind of objectivity. But having a producer made all the difference in the world, because it was somebody who could take the music for what it was—who didn't play to my ego and say, 'It's great. We won't change anything. How dare we change anything?' No, they would say, 'Hey look, here's something that's a little wacked. I think you should probably think about changing this.' They were able to get the best sound. Working with Paul Orofino, who engineered the record and co-produced it with the producer, Tony Miceli, was an honor for me, because he worked with Vinnie Moore and Leslie West and guys like that."

****What are your favorite songs on HISTORY, and why?**

"I think Scott and I kind of agree that 'Heart Of Stone' is our favorite song, because it was the song that was written truthfully about breaking down the walls of pride in my life and making it more sensitive to other people's needs. One of the prayers of Xalt has always been, 'Lord, break our hearts and make us sensitive to the needs of the people around us.' We haven't always been that way. 'Heart Of Stone' just kind of sums all that up really. Then I would say... I have a personal connection with songs like 'History,' because I like that driving, kind of medieval sound. I like the heavier sound. I think

Scott's second favorite song would be 'Unconditional Love,' because it's a true story that really happened to him. It was really God working through him to heal his outlook on a relationship while he was writing the song and recording it."

****Why don't you tell me about Randy Carlson's addition to the band and your new drummer?**

"Randy's been in the band since UNDER THE RUINS was recorded. He did that record with us, and he'd been in the band about nine months when that record came out. He worked out real well. He used to play in a band he helped start, called Armada. I think he started playing with them when he was like 15 or 16. He's all of 20 now. He's a great bass player. Spiritually it's been such a blessing to have his level of spiritual maturity in the band. He's a real prayer warrior. He's a real dedicated musician, and real dedicated minister. He's getting married in two weeks! Our new drummer is Rick Armstrong. The guy that used to play bass for Whitecross. He did the video with us, which was actually his first time out on the road with us. He did all the festivals with us this year, and he's been a great addition to the band. He's real quiet. He's got a great level of spiritual maturity as well. He's

"I think it is wise for any ministry to be under the authority of the church, or the youth pastor, whoever it is."

fairly quiet and reserved, but he can nail the parts that the studio cat laid down in the studio. He's been a real asset to the band."

****What is the music scene like up there in Michigan?**

"It's getting better. It's always improving. Detroit has always been like a real heavy... you know, Detroit is where Motown started. It's a label and a lot of the bands, but Michigan isn't really known for a big, heavy music scene other than Detroit, but lately... I'd like to think that we had something to do with that, as far as the Christian music scene, because before we ever had a contract or anything we were always playing. We started out, of course, like anybody else starts out—in your own home state. We played just about every city in the state, just going from place to place and meeting youth pastors who are willing to take a chance at being promoters. Some of these guys are still promoting concerts now, only on a larger scale. We were their first concert. Maybe now they're bringing in Guardian or X-Sinner. There's one guy here who brought in Mylon and D&K. I think the interest is being sparked here. The Celebration Festival was the first metal festival ever in Michigan, and I think that's going to continue next year. It's coming along. It's not Minneapolis or New York, or L.A., but then again, where else can you go fishing and hunting and all that wonderful stuff, except Michigan?"

****How did you come to the Lord?**

"I came to the Lord during the Rez/Jerusalem tour back in '82. Rez was just releasing 'D.M.Z.' and Jerusalem was touring with 'Warrior.' They came together to high schools in Grand Rapids. My brother had prayed for me for the longest time. I was young, rebellious, and thought I knew everything. I had no idea that Christians knew how to rock, so I mocked him my whole way there. When I got there, I heard the music, and it was, like, fabulous! But what stuck out more to me was the heart of Ulf Christiansson and the heart of Glenn Kaiser and how they summed up their ministries. When Glenn shared his heart that night with the audience and preached, it was like an arrow right through my heart. I knew right then and there that I had to have Jesus as part of my life. Ever since I've been walking with the Lord."

****Why have you placed yourself and your band under somebody's accountability?**

"Well, there's a lot of practical reasons behind that, as well as spiritual reasons. We place ourselves under the accountability and the authority, because it offers a tremendous amount of prayer cover. Since we're under their accountability, they're accountable to God for our spiritual well-being. They pray for us a lot. I also believe that, when you're out playing and you're out all the time and spend a lot of time away from your home church, you need to have somebody to bring you back and say, 'Look man, I love you and I'm concerned about you and I believe that you're falling away in this area,' or 'I believe that you need some encouragement here.' Being accountable to somebody is just that, being accountable, being willing to listen when somebody is pointing something out about yourself or about your ministry. The prayer cover that it offers, the comfort that it offers, and the guidance that it offers; I think it is wise for any ministry to be under the authority of the church or the youth pastor, or whoever it is."

****Well, is there anything else you'd like to comment on?**

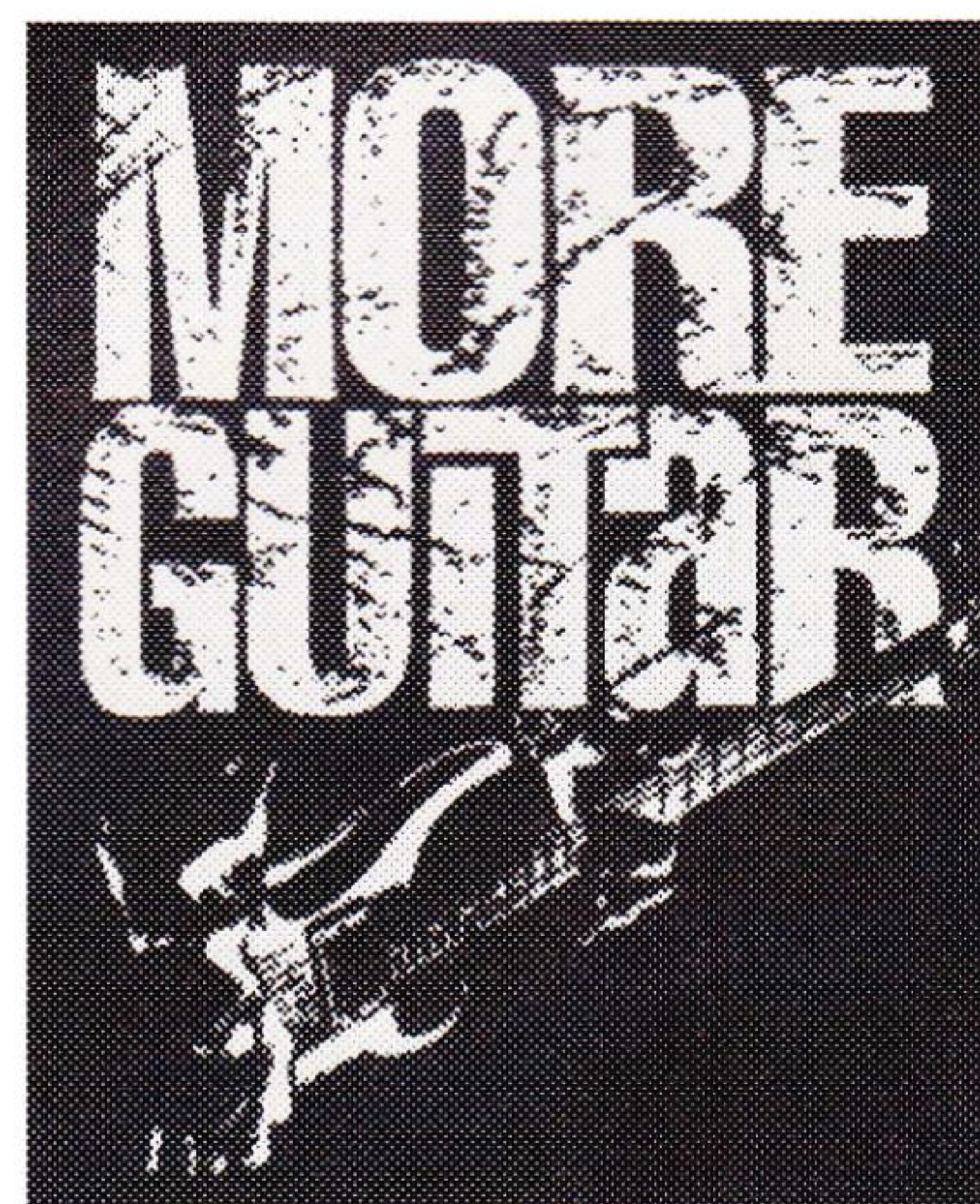
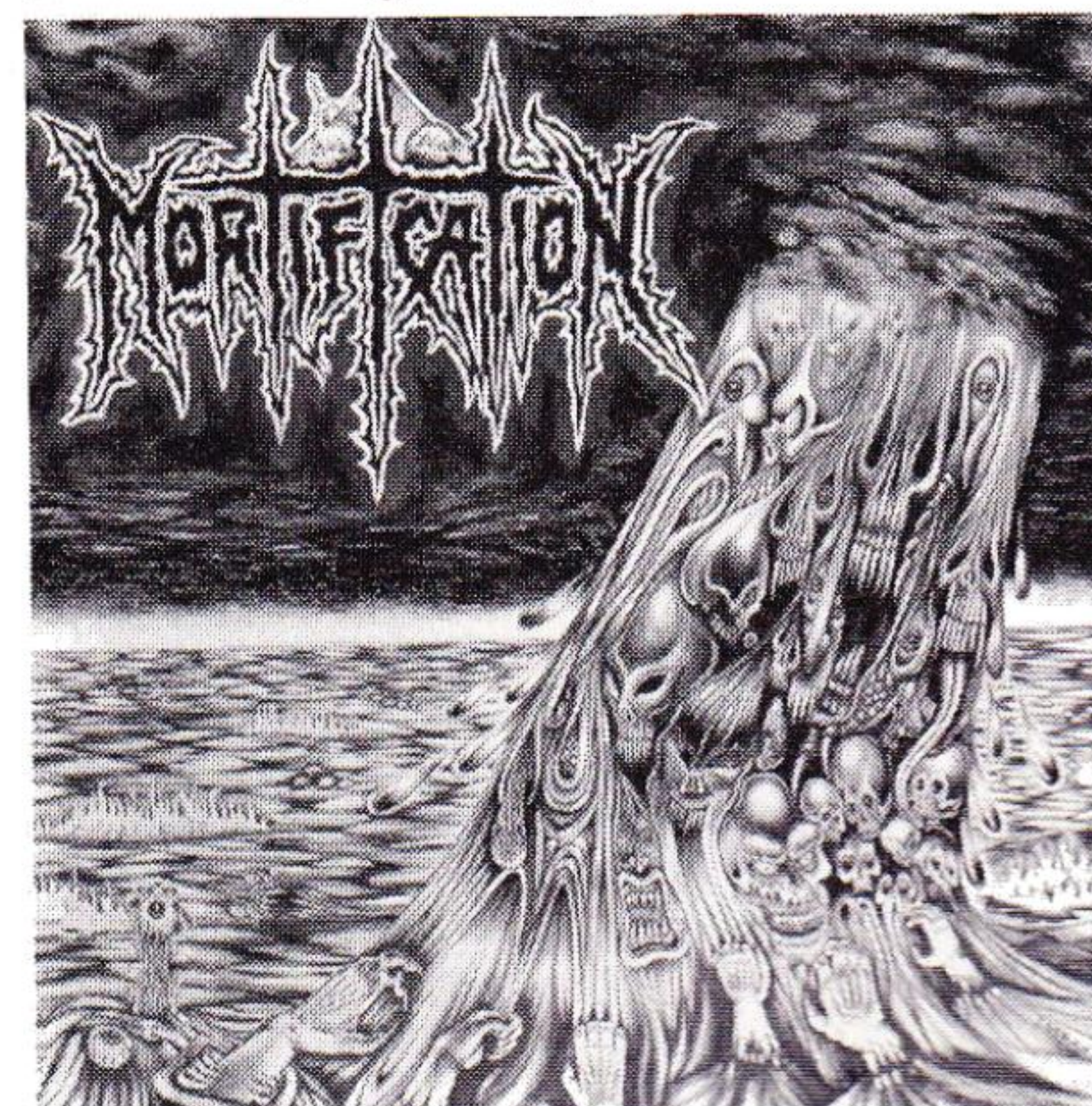
"I'd just like to say that I think we as the church have a lot of responsibility ahead of us in the way of work. The one thing that may keep us from doing those things is the idols that we build up for ourselves in music, in Christian entertainment. I would just say, 'Let's guard ourselves against how much time we spend with the folly of the latest record or keeping up on this or that, and trying to keep our eyes focused on Jesus.' That's the number one concern I have with kids and Christian music today. Everywhere I go, whenever I'm given a platform, that's my message. 'Let's not build any walls. Let's not build any idols. Let's keep our eyes on Jesus, because once you get your eyes off Jesus, and your eyes on a man or a movement or music or whatever, you're missing out on the very best that God has for you.'"

HM

1991 READER'S POLL

Can you believe it's already time to vote for the reader's poll again? Get out a piece of paper, think hard, and mail in your votes—one per category. Try to vote for products that were released and artists that were active in the year 1991. And remember, the categories are marked "Favorite" instead of "Best" for a reason: We don't need to incite competition in the body of Christ. Thanks to Frontline Music Group, the first 100 poll results received will win a copy of the debut MORTIFICATION cassette featuring the controversial album-cover artwork.

- 1) Favorite album of the year
- 2) Favorite song
- 3) Favorite live band
- 4) Favorite bassist
- 5) Favorite singer
- 6) Favorite drummer
- 7) Favorite guitarist
- 8) Favorite thrash/speed band
- 9) Favorite custom/indie tape
- 10) Overall favorite band
- 11) Favorite lyricist
- 12) Favorite producer
- 13) Favorite new band
- 14) Comeback of the year
- 15) Funniest/most humorous artist
- 16) Favorite movie
- 17) Favorite (single song) video



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MORTIFYING THE DEATH METAL WORLD

Erupting from the big island down under is one molten slab of grindcore metal known as Mortification. By way of a fax machine and a tape recorder, Heaven's Metal interviewed bassist/vocalist/founder Steve Rowe and his bandmates. Listen in as these "death metal missionaries" tell their story.

****Explain how it felt with your old label and how you were treated.**

"I realize that a lot of water has gone under the bridge," says Steve, "and I've wanted to be very sensitive, I guess, to other people and their reputation and things like that. I've wanted to speak out in the past concerning not only Pure Metal Records, but also Cream Of The Crop, another label I had quite a bit to deal with, but I decided that I still wanted to give the guys time to come good personally and also with the money that they owed us. Nothing has seemed to come forward at this stage, so I guess I will come out and say what I've actually been through, mainly for the purpose of letting other people know.

"It's very easy, I guess, for people to take advantage of young musicians who are keen to have albums out and are a little naïve about the music business. I guess in the past I've been a person who has accepted people's word maybe a little bit too lightly, which is an unfortunate thing to say when you're dealing with Christian businesses, but that's just the way it is. So, I just want to warn people out there to really check out contracts and check out people before you sign with 'em. Make sure that there's a lot of communication before contracts are signed, and don't jump into things head first.

"What happened with the Pure Metal deal goes back to 1988 and a band I was in called Lightforce. We self-financed and recorded an album called 'Mystical Thieves.' It cost us about A\$8,000 (Australian Dollars), and we signed with Pure Metal. In the contract we had a clause that stated that upon release of the album we would receive A\$8,000 to pay for our studio expenses. The thing that still bewilders me to this day is that after the album was released we must've phoned and faxed the company 50 times, and just could never get any sense out of them. We never received our A\$8,000 for the recording and the four of us that were in the band at the time are still tied down to monthly loan payments. It's really frustrating being a young Christian musician and being called by God to be in this ministry and some months I can barely put petrol in my car, because of these loan payments.

"It really bewildered me that Christians would behave this way. I can't say this any other way, but I wonder if the fact that we didn't get our money was planned by these people from the word go. When we signed the record contract in good faith, we were asked over the phone to send the master tapes for the album.



We didn't want to send the masters until we had the signatures of the Refuge Music Group people, but we were so naïve that we sent off the master tapes, and to this day have never seen the signatures of the record company, even after much asking.

"I had spoken to the head of that company about 18 months ago, and there was an apology for the lack of communication and a promise that we were at least going to receive the money that we were due for album sales, which hasn't happened to this day.

"Let me say now that Pure Metal Records is now on Star Song, so the new Pure Metal has got nothing to do with the Pure Metal that we were on, which was with the Refuge Music Group, a now-defunct label."

Steve also explained his relationship with Cream Of The Crop, but to keep a two-page story from becoming a 48-page story, here's the quick version: "My wife and I had just got back from our honeymoon. I had a secure job with Word Australia, and this guy from Cream Of The Crop offers me a job with a large salary, somewhere in the vicinity of \$40,000 a year to run his company here. Three months after starting the business I stopped hearing from this guy. I went on unemployment and put my wife and I under financial pressure. I hear from him six months later and he tells me he had an extreme illness that put him in the hospital. I accepted his apology and his promise to ring me

up three days later and send me \$3,000 in compensation for the job and hassles. To this day I have not heard from him again.

"The Lord wouldn't have us ripping off each other and lying to each other and trying to cover up the truth. Sometimes it takes a lot of breaking of pride to come forth and say you've failed in some way, but that's what needs to be done in a lot of these situations."

****How does it feel to now be on Intense?**

"Like I said before," repeats Steve, "it's great to be with a label with integrity. This time around I know we are dealing with a whole different kettle of fish with Frontline. I could just tell by the way we talked on the phone and the way they asked a lot about ministry, and they're willing to do things like pray with you over the phone and things like that. It's such a privilege to be on a label with bands of not just spiritual integrity, but also bands that are really cutting it musically, like Sacred Warrior, Deliverance, Vengeance, Tourniquet, and Ken Tamplin."

****Why don't you run through the current Mortification line-up?**

"I'm Michael," says Mr. Carlisle, "and, as well as being guitarist in the band, I'm involved in my church with bass playing on the

platform and I also answer quite a lot of the letters in the band. I'm interested in what kind of responses we get and seeing what people think."

"Besides playing bass and vocalizing the band," says Steve, "I'm involved in all the management duties and also promote the band and organize tours."

"I'm Jayson," states Mr. Sherlock. "I'm the drummer. It's good to be in a band where every member actually writes material. We all participate in the songwriting. I'm also involved in all of the artwork side of the band. I illustrated the secular version of the cover. It'd be good of you dudes to check that one out, rather than just be satisfied with the Christian version. It's quite good. I based it on Revelation 3:16, which talks about being lukewarm and God will spit you out of His mouth."

"Just so all you dudes understand what's going on," explains Steve, "the record company, because the artwork Jayson did was so radical, decided that they were unable to release it to the Christian market. So, most of you dudes who bought the album probably got it with just the Mortification logo on the cover."

****How has your live audience reacted to your new material?**

"The Australian audience has reacted pretty good to us," says Michael. "Being in Melbourne, we have a lot of grind and death bands come out. Basically, we find them all getting into it, especially asking us questions and stuff after the concerts. Of course, we tell 'em what we're all about."

"For example," Steve shares, "we played a concert recently and a couple hundred people were really thrashing out, moshing, jumping around, and really getting into it and enjoying it, which was really good. Between the songs they're giving the typical devil sign and screaming 'Satan, Satan,' and all this other stuff. About three-quarters into the set I tell 'em that we're a Christian band and that we stand up for positive lyrical content, and they really started abusing us and saying 'F-you!' and pushing my guitar and stuff. During the chorus of the next song all these guys near the front were smashing glasses on the floor and then all these dudes were stage diving onto the smashed glass. At the end of the concert all these guys were coming up with all these cuts over their arms, and we got to talk to them one on one. I was really floored that they were so mellow and so appreciative of the music that we'd played. They were like puppies. They weren't really a threat at all, like you would think when they were railing obscenities at us as we were playing."

An Australian metal magazine, called Hot Metal, recently recognized Mortification as "quite a few lengths ahead in the Australian death metal scene," a fact Steve and the boys relish. "It's such a blessing that God's giving us favor."

****How did you get Roger Martinez to produce, and how was it working with him?**

"Last year we were shopping a lot of demos," explains Steve, "including some live demos that I sent Roger. I decided we'd get some money together from some friends and things and pay for Roger Martinez to fly out here and spend some days in the studio producing some tracks for an album. He spoke to Intense and said, 'Look, there's some guys in Australia that are willing to fly me out there and pay for the recording of some tracks.' He sort of vouched for us that we had ourselves together. He asked if they'd let him mix it down at the studios there at their expense, whether we did or did not get signed. They agreed to that, so Roger flew out here and we went into the studio for three days, recording all 11 tracks in that time. They weren't mixed down. Roger just took the bare tracks and then came on tour with us in Australia. He spoke at some of the concerts after we played and gave an appeal for people to receive Christ. He also taught a workshop before we went into the studio, as part of a youth ministry I run called 'Metal Kingdom.' When Roger got back, he had to start working on the new Vengeance Rising album right away, so we had to wait awhile. We started negotiating with Intense, and Roger put together a rough mix and played it for them."

"We are really happy with how the album turned out production-wise, considering we only spent three days recording it. We know that the next time we record, with more time and money, we'll be able to come up with something that is really happening. Working with Roger was real interesting. He's a real go-ahead guy. He obviously is a very confident guy that really knows what he's on about. It was good working with someone with confidence in what he was doing, and in us doing well in the style that we're doing."

****Why the transition to vocals, Steve?**

"When the 'Mystical Thieves Lightforce line-up broke up in 1989," explains Steve, "I was on my own. I always had a real fascination with three-piece bands. Back in the early 80's, before I recommitted my life to the Lord, I was really into bands like Motorhead, Venom, and a German thrash group called Sodom. With Lightforce breaking up, I really wanted to try not only play bass, but vocalizing in a death metal style. So, we just experimented with it. When Roger came over, we really decided to go for the full-on grindcore/death metal sound. I'd really seen the effect that bands like Morbid Angel and Deicide were having. With such a heavy satanic influence, we saw a real need to minister in that area."

****What has the Lord taught you in the last four years?**

"I think that the thing the Lord has taught me the most is patience," says Steve. "Anybody out there really wanting to get out and minister for God in this way really, really needs to learn to have patience. We live in a 'smash

and grab' world, where everybody tries to have instant satisfaction. For instance, people want instant sex and they take drugs for instant highs, and a lot of people want to have an instant success with a band. God wants us to live lives of perseverance and to trust Him, and trust that in His time He will bring to pass all the things that we desire to do for Him."

****How do you study the Bible?**

"I've found that one good way to study the Bible is with systematic studies on different themes," says Steve. "I think that brings in a lot of stability in studying the Bible. In Metal Kingdom, we'll spend a month studying something like discipleship or the Holy Spirit. I think one good thing with the Bible is just to purely read it. Get in there and read it each day. I'm getting so much more out of the Bible with aids like Bible dictionaries and concordances, and different Bible reviews and commentaries, which can always add to the flavor of the Bible and help you understand more and more of what the Bible is on about."

****Any advice for a newlywed musician?**

"I think it's very important for any musician that's involved in heavy metal that has just been married or about to get married to be really sensitive to their wife's needs and be really aware of a woman's natural need to find security in her husband. I really need to be sensitive to her needs in every way and make sure we are provided for financially, you know, the bills are paid and the food's on the table."

"With being involved with heavy metal, the devil will always try to pull down this ministry. The best way for Satan to get to me is to get to my wife, Kate, because he can affect me so much by affecting her. We really need to cover our wives with a lot of prayer. Daily pray together for the protection of the Lord, because Satan is out there to discourage wives and to cause marriage break-ups. If there's a lifestyle that causes a stress upon marriage, it's being involved in music—especially heavy metal, because the financial side of it is very often not that profitable."

****Anything else you'd like to add?**

"Please pray for us as often as you can," says Jayson, "because we do go through a lot of hassles here and there."

"We'll be touring the United States in June and July of 1992," announces Steve, "so look for Mortification at that time."

"I really believe that God is looking for men and women of spiritual integrity, with a real heart sold out for Him. Not only playing in metal bands, but also young people being raised up to win people for Christ in this scene and witnessing to their friends and stuff. I just want to put an emphasis on integrity and holiness and a holiness lifestyle, because that's a very important lifestyle for us to live as Christians."

HM

MORIFICATION

Steve Rowe

Michael Carlisle

Jayson Sherlock

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SPEED METAL WITH AN ANGRY TWIST

Just when you thought Christian rock music was getting serious, an album like WHAT A JOKE comes out. What's the world coming to? What's running through these crazed musicians' minds? Read on, and see if you can come up with a proper prognosis.

****What makes Deliverance tick?**

(long pause)"That's the question?" ponders Jimmy Brown II. "Do you want to answer it George?"

"What makes Deliverance tick is..." ponders George Ochoa. "I'll be real honest with ya: It's the Lord that really keeps us going on. Us being Christians. If we weren't, I think a lot of us would be long gone. In dealing with the different attitudes in the band, and the different personalities, it's God that keeps us together. Jimmy and I, even though we get in massive fights sometimes, we've got a pretty good working relationship."

"You know what I call my and George's working relationship?" asks Jimmy. "Whether he wants to admit it or not, but a lot of people have observed it. They definitely say it's the 'brother relationship.' It's kind of like a big brother/little brother situation, you know what I mean? There's a lot of fighting and quarreling, but there's also a lot of meeting on each other's terms and being able to collaborate and compromise on a lot of things together."

"I've gone at it with people in bands," says George, "where it's a lot deeper than just bragging, or a lot deeper than...you know, to where you almost throw blows. With me and Jimmy, when we disagree we know somehow it will work out. It's not a big deal. We're deeper than skin deep. We don't cut each other to the core. If we did, we wouldn't be together. He'd go his way and I'd go mine."

"It's really cool," says Jimmy, "because God has really blessed the relationship that we're able to work with each other. George has really taught me a lot by his experience, and being older and all. I've taught him a lot about the speed metal realm, since he was a glam rocker before!" (both laugh hysterically)

****What ticks Deliverance off?**

"Mediocre promoters," quips Jimmy.

"The promoter thing is getting old Jimmy," corrects George.

"I like attacking that situation," retorts Jimmy (Oh no! A fight already!—Ed).

"Mediocrity in the name of Christianity—that ticks us off big time."

"We've been saying that for a long time, too," says George, "because we've seen it. We've toured. We deal with the record company, mediocre magazines like you... Nah, just kidding. No, you're happenin' dude."

"Not even," agrees Jimmy. "You guys are the most awesome, even though I've, like, supported you forever and people always say, 'What's your favorite mag?' I say, 'Heaven's Metal.' But, have I ever gotten the centerfold? Nah. What a bummer, dude."

"Go ahead, Jimmy," continues

George. "Talk about WHAT A JOKE and what ticked us off to write some of the stuff in there."

"A lot of that stuff in there is personal experience," elaborates Jimmy, "and getting to talk to a lot of different people. You can really tell that there's an extreme angry vibe on our new album. As a matter of fact, I did a radio interview over in Denver and somebody commented on that, and they thought it was really needed in the Christian realm. I thought that was a rather odd comment, but now I understand by what that lady meant."

"There's too much of the, 'Yeah, Jesus loves you,' and the straight-out Gospel released, which we presented in our last two albums very strongly, and it's still there on our third one, but we're also attacking from a different aspect. We attack the idiocies of the world, like in the song 'What A Joke' and 'Pseudo Intellectual': the people that say, 'There is no God,' and 'The Bible contradicts itself' and all sorts of garbage. You know, saying things that don't hold water, nothing that substantiates what they're saying. That

"When you come back \$25,000 in debt from (a) tour, it's pretty hard to discern where God's will is.

Going out to do this cheesy tour to win souls, or should I just cut my hair and become a lawyer?"

makes us real mad. Different songs could tell you what ticks us off: 'Prophet Of Idiocy,' you know, preachers that twist the Word and misconstrue it and stuff, doing things to make you think that you need to do something for them and say that it's the will of God and so on. People that twist the Word to indulge in their own lust."

"What 'Pseudo Intellectual' is about," adds George, "is just like people, even in the metal genre, that bag on Christianity without any idea of what true Christianity is. I really get tired of it."

"A lot of people just went off on the Jim and Tammy thing," adds Jimmy, "and also the Swaggart thing, without having any real knowledge of what really goes on in Christianity or what the Bible says. A lot of these people have never picked up the Bible and read it, nor have attempted to, yet they even have the audacity to say, 'Well, the Bible contradicts itself.' Basically, like the song says, they parrot what they've heard. That's a couple things that tick us off."

****How do you feel about the Christian music industry?**

"Ha, ha, ha, ha," erupts George. "Write, 'Much laughter, finally got their breath, and now they're ready to talk.' Okay, 'Now trying to talk, but choked because they laughed so hard.'"

"We're not being dramatic, Doug," explains Jimmy.

"Basically," continues dramatic George, "I get comments from certain people like, 'We're a Christian company,' or 'Christian promoters,' and that's cool and everything, but I really believe that 90% of what's going on in Christian metal is missing the mark. The Gospel needs to be in a place where it's going to save souls. I believe that the Christian industry is miserably failing to do that...miserably. They are being satisfied with their Christian bookstore sales and not willing to move on: a) It's a stupid business move, because you could sell more albums in the secular realm, because basically the Christian realm is tapped out; and b) That's where the Gospel belongs in the first place—the secular realm. I'm not just talking record companies, I'm talking promoters, and booking agencies. They've created a world for themselves, and the world is called the 'Contemporary Christian music world,' and they're very happy to just deal with that, without wanting to branch out."

"I believe they're severely missing the boat by not seeing what God has called these bands to do. A lot of these companies will say they're in touch with what the bands are doing, and they really support the ministries...but do they really? I think not. They don't, because you don't really, really see the vision of reaching out to the unbelieving world and having them hear the Gospel. How do you do that? Gosh, I can get into a lot of technical views to talk about, but that's the problem. I could talk about how we can effectively penetrate the secular market, but that simply remains to be seen. We're still praying for that. Deliverance is still going full-force with that vision. We're not going to let any record company, or anybody slow us down from doing that. We're going full-force to put the Gospel where it belongs. As the Christian music scene is happening now, if we waited for it to get us there, we'd be waiting until never-neverland. It wouldn't happen. We're doing it ourselves."

****It would seem logical that it's not worth talking about the problem if you don't talk about a solution, so why don't you get into some of the answers?**

"Dealing with the right booking agents," lists off George, "dealing with the proper distribution on getting the records in the stores where they can be accessible to any Joe Schmo Slayer or Metallica fan, because as it is, you ain't gonna get one of those kids inside of Mrs. Jones' Christian Bookstore. It ain't gonna happen. If the album's available—and that's a major, major flaw right there... Another major flaw is no advertising in the secular realm. How are kids going to know the record is in the store in the first place, unless there's advertising taken. Advertising can be from getting articles inside all these secular magazines. Getting write-ups, getting played on the secular radio stations, which is the CMJ (College Music Journal) market, the college market."

"I've mentioned this to a couple



"WE'RE IN THIS FOR THE MONEY!"—WHAT A JOKE!!

people, and they've said, 'Well, we're not a secular company.' If we look at secular companies and see the successes a lot of 'em have, even in this genre of speed metal/thrash, which is exploding right now, they sell so many albums... To mimic their steps to me would be like the thing to do, because they're obviously doing something right. The Gospel is not being put in the right hands. It's great that we're encouraging Christian kids, but I don't feel Deliverance is called to do that per se. Not that we'll shun them, no way. I could get into a lot more solutions. It would get into just having to deal with the people in the business to wake up, to really wake up and smell the coffee. Come on, Jimmy. Add something."

"Yeah," quips Jimmy. "No, you covered it 100%, man. It's exactly what I wanted to say. The solution is the record company has got to quit being content with making their little whatever, X-amount of dollars, on the Christian market. A lot of these people talk about ministry and they want to reach the lost, but how are they going to reach the lost? I've heard it said time and time again: 'It's hard to get the lost to go to church. Sometimes you have to go out to them,' especially in our realm, or particular genre. The same with the Christian bookstores. I'm not knocking them. I appreciate and love each and every one of them. We've got to take this music out to where it belongs, and that's the secular realm. I feel Deliverance has a two-fold ministry: to encourage Christians, and to give them an alternative music to listen to; and, number two, to reach the lost. I think we've fulfilled the Christian part of our ministry. Now we have to reach the lost. The only way to do that is to venture out. Someone to make that investment and see what happens."

**What do you think will be required on your end? Let's say a company says, "Okay, if I do this, what should we expect of you?" What would your answer be?

"Go ahead Jimmy," says George bravely.

"We'll do everything it takes," answers Jimmy. "What it boils down to is they need to quit saying 'it's ministry' and stuff. What it boils down to is dollars. That's why Christian record companies act just like secular companies. If an act isn't cutting it? Who gives a f--- if its ministering or not? If it ain't selling records, then it's gone down the tubes. They're history. They're cut from the label. There's the same turn-around. If the band's doing well, you've gotta help the band out in certain ways."

**"We're not
primadonnas asking for
a million dollars
either.
We're asking
for enough
to support our families."**

"I think, on our end, what most labels expect of their bands is touring, because touring does generate record sales. Touring is really hard when we have to leave our families, our jobs, and jeopardize a lot of things in our lives financially to go out and do a 'pay you in cheeseballs' or 'pay you in pizza' tours. Again, going back to slagging on Christian promoters. I don't do it with joy in my faith, but the whole thing of going out doing a cheesy tour, and coming home \$20,000 in debt isn't the way to do it. Many acts, like Deliverance and Vengeance have done tours and come back in debt. I think a lot of it is the (record) company doesn't get behind the tours. They encourage the tours, but they don't get behind the tours. We need the Christian companies to get behind those bands that are willing to work by touring and going out there."

"I think that's what they ask. They ask us, 'What are you willing to do?' Well, the big thing is, 'Are you willing to tour?' Well, yes, we're willing to tour, but we're not going to leave

our families in debt. We're not going to leave jobs that we're gonna come home jobless and all this kind of stuff, and end up \$20,000 in debt. It just does not make sense. You've got to help us to make this an incredible tour. If we look at the secular people, the ones that do it right, if we look at their examples, the record company plays a big role in touring and stuff. You can't just ask a band, 'Well, go out and tour to generate more record sales, so I can pay my car payments,' when we're the ones starving and stuff. It just doesn't make sense."

"Another thing that I would add to that too," says George, "is we're going to be hard working, man. We're going to write the best music we can write and we're willing to tour, but we're not going to go out, like Jimmy said, and lose our shirt. We want to tour, but we just want to do it under the proper circumstances. We're not primadonnas where we're asking for a million dollars each either. No, we're asking for enough to support our families."

"The thing that's funny," adds Jimmy, "is a lot of these people would say, 'Well, we're not a Christian company,' but yet they pull the secular example. I even heard one person say, 'Look at Guns 'N' Roses. They sat in their house and ate peanut butter and jelly sandwiches,' and all this kind of stuff. Well, God bless them, but check it out, we've got families to feed. They didn't. I'm sure if we were all single, we'd probably live in one house together or something, but it just isn't so. You can't use that actual analogy and apply it to all bands."

"I hope we come off a little angry with this," chides George. "Make it sound that way. We're sick of it! (he yells) You know what this has done? It's made a lot of bands sick of it, to where they've gone to the point of breaking up and forgetting the whole music scene and maybe even their initial calling from God, because it's a lame scene."

"Let's say a lot of these bands that have broken up," says Jimmy, "yeah, they were called from God. They are a ministry, but, because of all this pollution under the name of Christian entertainment, it's driven all of us to ruin, to where they just don't want to even do it, whether it's God's will or not. They just don't want to do it. That's wrong."

"It's hard to discern if it's God's will at that point," comments George.

"When you're watching your kids grow out of their clothes," interjects Jimmy, "or your wife running on her last pair of panty hose, and you don't have any clothes and wonder where your next paycheck is going to come for food, because you just came back \$25,000 in debt from tour, it's pretty hard to discern where God's will is. In going out to do this cheesy tour to win souls, or should I just cut my hair and become a lawyer? It's hard at that point, and I'm not saying these other bands that have broken up don't know the will of God. It's really hard for us. Many times I've pondered the thought, but I really do know where God's led me to go, plus it's just been my dream. I'm thankful for the fact that God has even allowed me to continue." **HM**

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WHAT IS ACCOUNTABILITY? (Part Two)



The violet burning is a prototype model for a wise but unfortunately uncommon relationship between church and band. The band's label, New Breed Music, is also the band's church—The Vineyard Christian Fellowship. Each member of the violet burning is on staff at The Vineyard, and can be found working at the church mailroom, etc. when not on the road touring. While a far cry from a heavy metal outfit, this band has the ideal accountability relationship to study. Vocalist and band leader **Mike Pritzel** explains some of the in's and out's of this accountable relationship.

****Why don't you give me a brief synopsis or outline of the accountability structure that your band, and you personally, have set up with your church?**

“What we have set up, has been an incredible blessing. Since I was 18 I've been able to befriend bands like Undercover, The Altar Boys, The Choir, Lifesavers, L.S.U., all those bands from California. I've seen the things they did right and the areas they got burned. What I've learned is that being accountable to a pastor, to your shepherd, is an incredible thing. What we do at The Vineyard and at New Breed Music is we have each member of the band meet with a pastor regularly. We try like once a week—if not that, because sometimes the pastors get real busy, and we belong to a big church—then at least once every other week, so they meet a couple times a month. Then we meet as a band usually...not just with a pastor, but with a group of artists once a month, with the New Breed artists. What we do is we'll... I'll just use me personally. I've been meeting with a pastor for about two years now. In my own life we just sit and talk about what's going on, about my struggles with whatever it is, whether it's pride, lust, greed, hatred, bitterness, anything that's been going on. Usually we just talk.

“My pastors are just like my friends. They're really...I've never had that type of thing in the past. I don't think many bands do, because what happens is their pastors really aren't shepherds like they're supposed to. The

shepherds are supposed to care for the sheep, and nurse 'em, and help 'em, and correct 'em. Psalm 23 says 'Your rod and Your staff they comfort me.' Correction should be a comforting thing, not something that causes bitterness. Not a thing that causes rejection. Here at The Vineyard I've just been so blessed to have pastors that cover me, and when I make mistakes, they're there.

“I'm gonna make mistakes, you know what I mean? I'm a single man, I'm 25. The Lord's been raising up our ministry. We've played in front of thousands of people over just this past year, and often, especially with girls... There's girls that wanna meet you. I've gotten letters from girls that think they're going to marry me. Girls I don't even know or never met. Things like that. It can bring all sorts of

confusion, like 'What's this?' They've really been there protecting me.

“In the past, before I was accountable, I went to a different church. The pastors were kind of far off and I wasn't able to just meet and talk with 'em as my friend. It was another big church. The issue is really that I believe the pastors are there to care for the sheep and the musicians. I think there's two areas in Christian music, where there's been failure. On one half, the church has failed by not recognizing the anointing and the calling and the tool that music is; whatever style it is: rap, metal, thrash, alternative, pop, or Sandi Patti. Really, the church has failed to recognize that. Also the musicians have failed. Many musicians have been burned by the church or rejected and so, because of that, they hold it against the church. They assume that all pastors will be that way.

“I've been a musician who's been burned by the church, and rejected and beat up, and I've found that there's pastors who want to care for me. The hard thing for me is submitting myself to authority and saying, 'Okay, I'll submit to you.' Submission, biblically—submitting to the authority of the church—is a healthy thing. It's a good thing. In my own life it's been that blessing that I've been looking for. It keeps me out of sin, and keeps me emotionally stable. Musicians can be very passionate people. For me, I'm a real passionate guy. I can get into something real big and then into another thing, you know what I mean? Musicians are real moody. Spiritually, it keeps me accountable, so I'm preaching things that are in the Word; so I'm not preaching Mike Pritzel, but I'm preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and leading men to Christ, rather than leading 'em to us as a band, because our goal is really to minister.”

****Why did you decide to submit yourself to an accountable relationship?**

“For protection, really. Many people around the country are wary of Christian musicians. Me being accountable to my pastors is a sign that shows people that we are doing our best to serve Christ—to serve Him and do what

METAL TRACKS

pleases Him. So, it's a protection thing. It helps when rumors get started. I've seen men destroyed by rumors, true or not true. It doesn't matter. Gossip and slander destroys the body of Christ. So, you have that protection against that, where I have authority who covers me and says, 'Look, this isn't true,' or 'Yes, this is true, he's repented...' So I have that covering and that protection.

“Why I've submitted myself? I've seen so many people burned by the church and burned within the Christian music industry that I didn't want to end up in the same place. Not that I'll never get burned, but if I do get burned or if people slander us or I get hurt in some type of thing, I'll be protected and covered. I'm gonna make it through. I know that my pastors are gonna stand by me through thick and thin, whatever I go through. My pastors realize that the enemy would love to destroy me before he would even tear down one of them, because I have the ability as an evangelist and a musician to reach thousands of young people that they'll never reach. I can reach 'em in one night or over the period of a month on tour or through the album, where they're covering is just to a church of, depending on how big the church is, 300 to 1,000, or whatever. Really they're out to protect me and cover me.” **HM**

* * * * *

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12/6 Ypsilanti MI
12/7 TBA, Michigan

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11/23-24 Tourniquet, Deliverance, X-Sinner, Ransom, Love Life, scaterd-few, Jaguar, and too many others to mention. Irvine CA

Guardian's video, “Power Of Love”, has been appearing on MTV's “Headbanger's Ball.” If you'd like to support the band in this breakthrough effort, you can call **1-900-884-2MTV** (at 65 cents a call—ask your parents first!) and express your interest in Guardian.

Oz Fox tells me that he fronted Stryper minus Michael Sweet on its recent European tour, which was cut short before it started due to Michael coming down with pneumonia. Oz said he met with Tim and Robert and said, “Look, here's seven songs that I could sing lead vocals for, and the promoter really wants us to play, so what do you say?” The guys went for it, making heavy metal history, doing such a good job that the promoter had the band do it again on one more date.

Holy Soldier is traveling to Guatemala and El Salvador, where the band will perform on a national tv show, as well as conduct several radio and press interviews. Promoted in part by Martin Huhl, who brought Whitecross and Xalt down a year ago, and the First Lady Of Guatemala. Holy Soldier is getting some fantastic radio exposure (top 40 and top 10) with “See No Evil” and “Eyes Of Innocence.”

Believer is presently doing a couple of shows with death metallers **Sacrifice** and **Bolt Thrower**. Shortly after C-Stone the band played at the Milwaukee Metal Fest with **Sepultura** and **Deicide**. **Jeff Scheetz** will be releasing another instru-metal album, this time leaning towards a blues flavored style. **X-Sinner** has been getting the attention of its hometown radio station, KLOS, which will play a few cuts from its new album. Drummer **Mike Buckner** married in Lake Tahoe last month.

The Galactic Cowboys hopped on the road with **Overkill**. **King's X** is resting after a year on the road and preparing for its next album, tentatively titled SINCE HECTOR WAS A PUP, which was tossed around last time as well. Drummer **Jerry Gaskill** and wife Grace had the joy of welcoming their third son, John Gracen, into the world last August.

Former **Eternal Ryte** shredmonger **Bob Smith** has finally got his new band happenin' with Steve DeRoque, who used to front his own band called DeRoque and also co-wrote the Recon tune “Dreams.” The band is called **Extra! Extra!** and can be contacted at: 206 N. Mountain Ave, Monrovia CA 91016.

Bride is going to play several shows in Brazil's largest cities starting in February. **Zion** is now planning to record its follow-up album to THUNDER FROM THE MOUNTAIN. The band has found a new vocalist in Scott Oslow, who radio host Roger Roach compares to Guardian's Jamie Rowe. **Steve Griffith** is being looked at to produce. The band has relocated to the Seattle area. Joining Zion on Image Records will be Louisville, Kentucky metalheads **White Ray**, who signed up in September.

Novella's new guitarist, Derek Jan, has some professional experience under his belt. He wrote the soundtrack for the “Great American Road Belongs To Buick” commercial. **Bloodgood** performed its first ever acoustic set recently, which received a great audience response. Wives Marilyn Bloodgood and Joyce Carlsen added background vocals. **L.O.U.D.**

won the talent search contest sponsored by Star Song/Pure Metal at the Kingdom Bound festival, which is turning into quite a metal event. L.O.U.D. will be recording a cut on a future Star Song compilation.

Did any of you freak out when you heard **Kiss** cover the tune “God Gave Rock And Roll To You?” Did you know that **Petra** didn't write the tune? No, it's a cover of the seventies power rock band **Argent**. Petra's version actually had changed lyrics, which was permitted them by the song's publishers. Dallas-based metallers **Zadox**, who played at C-Stone's New Talent stage, have a new address: 3212 Eastbrook, Mesquite TX 75150. A new Canadian band called Envoy with a **Heart/Toronto** sound plan to have an album out by March.

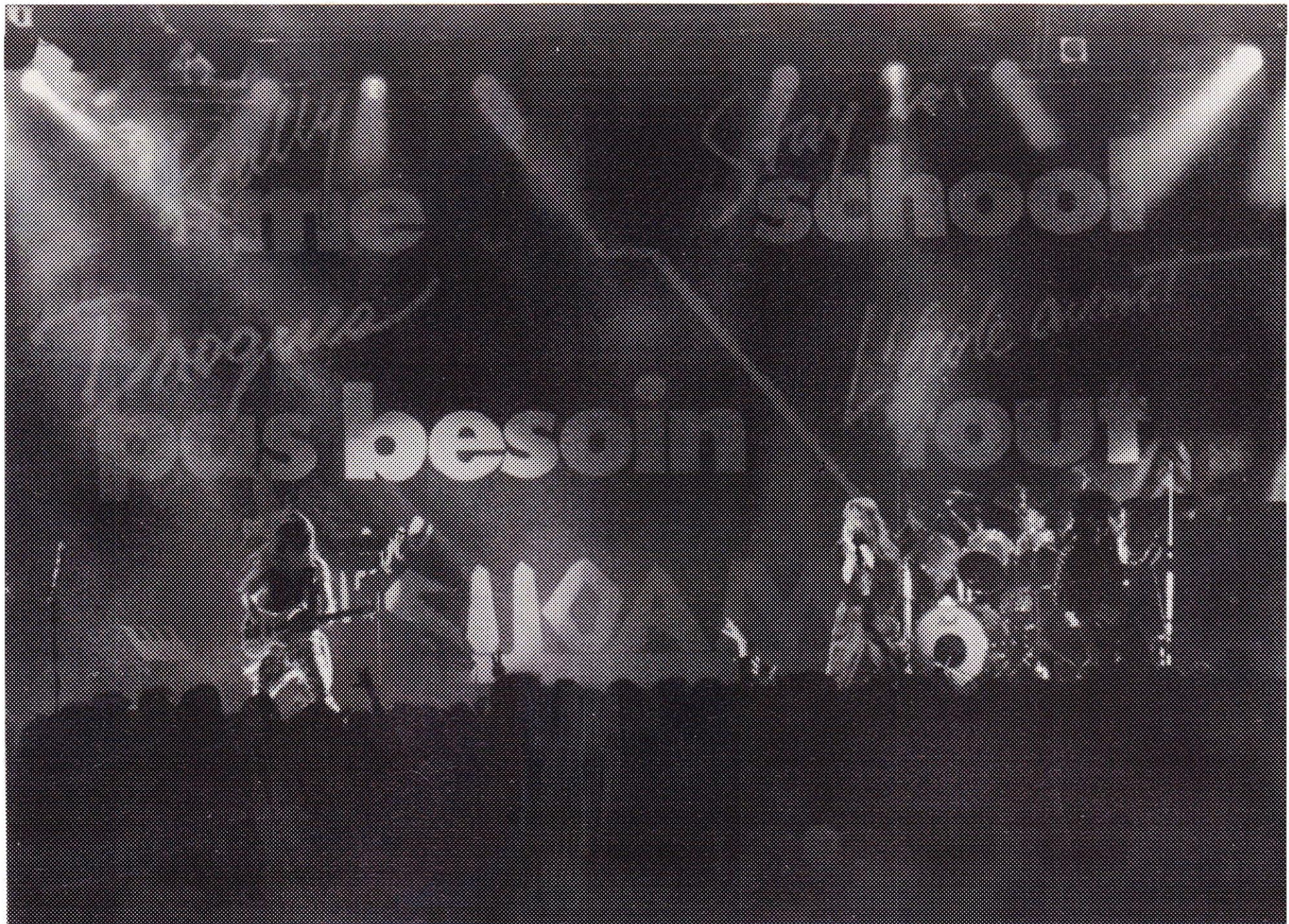
Crashdog, who opened for REZ in front of an estimated 20,000 on Pensacola's beach this summer, have special prices for its debut album HUMANE SOCIETY: Cassettes \$7.95 and CD's \$12.95. There's also coupons in the new Cornerstone Magazine for the much lower Cornerstone Festival prices. **REZ's** classic first two albums, AWAITING YOUR REPLY and RAINBOW'S END are available on CD for the first time via mail order only for \$12.95 each. Send check or money order to: Grrr recordS, 939 W. Wilson, Chicago IL 60640.

The **Sekel** and **Order Of Chaos** tapes are still available, but from a new address: Rob Wynter, C-6-F-21 Hnas Davila, Bayamon PR 00959. Some members of Sekel have formed the new band **Non-Point Factor**.

Heart Communications, Inc. is an organization planning to get a 24-hour Christian rock radio station in major cities all across the U.S., starting in Minneapolis, Minnesota. A magazine, a warehouse/rehearsal space for the arts (not just music), video production, and an international Christian musician network service are a few of the other plans slated by this industrious group. For more information, you can call Dan McGowen at 612-331-2440.

Sardonyx has its bass player back, thanks to the quick end to Operation Desert Storm. The band should be recording another tape soon. Germany is sporting some happenin' action, including: **King's Crowd**, a hard rockin' blues-influenced band with three demos out. One of Germany's top Christian bands. Write c/o Thomas Gamper, auf der Kippe 3c, 4510 Haltingen, Germany. **Creed's** singer left, leaving the band looking. **Holy Warrior** is a speed metal band with two demos that has toured Poland. Write c/o Martin Lishc, Kurfurstenweg G6, 4018 Langenfeld, Germany. **Chryztyne** is a power metal band a la Whitesnake. They are working on a demo and have done a show with **Charizma** on German tv. Write c/o Lars Nippa, Storzenstr. 1, 7537 Remchingen 2, Germany.

Bloody Cross is looking for a new record deal and is changing its sound to a more crossover style. Anyone interested in buying a list of nearly 400 Christian metal concert promoters may contact Robert Hawes Jr. at Stage Right Productions at: PO Box 533, Genesee MI 48437. The James Lloyd Group also has a list of over 1,500 organizations who have booked a Christian music concert. They can be reached at: Box 3, Ashland OR 97520.



SILOAM

Kreyson is Czechoslovakia's premiere Christian metal band. Look to here more from them in these pages soon.

Tourniquet is finishing its one-hour "Video Biopsy," which will be available soon. By the way, ever wondered what Tourniquet did for fun? Victor and Ted like billiards, Guy likes to skateboard, and Eric likes to surf.

Mark Cherone, brother of **Extreme's Gary Cherone**, is the lead guitarist and lyricist for a secular metal band called **Flesh**. Randy Rocker had a chance to talk to him at the Foundations Forum Convention, and found out he's a Christian like Gary, has an on-fire mother who spends a lot of time ministering to both sons.

The Soviet government's invitation to Pastor Bob, Tourniquet and **Bloodgood**, sparked **Jim LaVerde** and **Guy Ritter** to write a song that could be used to raise funds for the trip. The resulting rock/praise single, "Fingers Of His Hand," will be aired on Christian rock radio programs across the country with a special tag asking for donations to help send the groups to the festival. Some familiar names that helped out with vocals include: **Roger** and **Randy Rose** of **Mad At The World**, **Lisa Faxon** of **Ransom**, and **Jimmy Brown** of **Deliverance**. Musicians included: **Ted Kirkpatrick** on drums, the awesome **Joshua Perahia** on guitar, **Dave Chumchal** on keyboards, and, of course the song's producer Jim LaVerde on bass. It has been estimated that the festival in Leningrad will attract a minimum of 20,000 people.

Jerusalem is still happening, according to **Ulf Christiansson** in an interview with The New Union's Steve Baker (which will be printed in a future issue). He and the band are

seeking the Lord for a "new music" with a powerful anointing upon it...but I'll let Ulf explain it later.

Mark Farner was a guest on the "Nashville Now" show on The Nashville Network, where he performed three songs from **SOME KIND OF WONDERFUL**. Frontline Records has garnered a distribution/marketing deal with the Super Club Music Corporation, a 400-chain outlet with headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia. The new Rick Elias release, **TEN STORIES**, will be displayed in front of Turtles stores and sold at a special price with the "no risk disc" guarantee. This special attention may pave the way for future promotions with Christian metal product...

Royal Blood has moved to: 556 E. 9th St, Chico CA 95928. A directory is available with a comprehensive listing of artists, producers, media, and other music companies available separately or bound together. For more info, write: Hans Loeve, PO Box 9523, 3506 GM Utrecht, The Netherlands.

Siloam is a young new band from Canada that has experienced most every rocker's dreams already in its young career. This band has toured across Canada as part of an anti-drug campaign, which was sponsored in part by McDonald's, Pepsi, major hotel chains, fuel companies, and the Canadian government! This sponsorship allowed the band to travel with over a million dollars worth of staging, sound, and light gear, which they sometimes used in front of audiences in arenas and stadiums as large as 10,000 kids. "A Hercules jet from the Canadian government flew us up 1,000 miles above the Arctic Circle," says drummer and founder Brian Lutes, "to the most remote place around. Our hearts really went out to what we saw there. I

talked to one girl who is 14 and she's got four of her own kids! A lot of these kids come from broken homes. Their fathers are either dead or out drunk someplace, and their mothers have had to give them up, so you'll have 400 of these kids living in a hostel. They have to keep the supply closets locked, because these kids will steal cases of liquid paper and sniff it to get high. When we got off the plane, this one kid went up to one of us and offered him a swig of Aqua-Velva (after shave), you know what I mean? This is the poison that these kids are drinking. As a result of this tour, we've got like over 1,500 letters back from kids, all of 'em secular.

"One kid wrote me and said, 'You guys almost saved my life when you came up. I felt I could reach out to you guys, and you'd believe me, even though we'd never talked. I never told anybody this before, but my father rapes me every single night. I blame myself for it, and I slashed my wrists. I ended up in the hospital and, when I reach out for my brother and asked him to help me, he told me next time to slit my throat and be done with it.' She said, 'I'm scared and I don't want to live anymore,' so I got on the phone and found her. She couldn't believe it. 'A rock star like you phoning me up!' I explained to her, 'Look, we really care. We're just human beings.' I told her to reach out to the Lord. I ended up calling up the principal and a social worker. Now this girl is living in residential treatment, away from her father.

"Another girl wrote and told us how her dad forced her to have an abortion, which she didn't want to do. Afterwards she talked the hospital into letting her see the baby, which I've never heard of before, and when she saw it she wanted to commit suicide. I ended up getting in



*"...when the roll is called and
you're above the azure blue;
and the book of life is opened up,
will Jesus look at you..."*

"Heaven Calling"...Scott Springer, John Elefante

HALO

HEAVEN CALLING

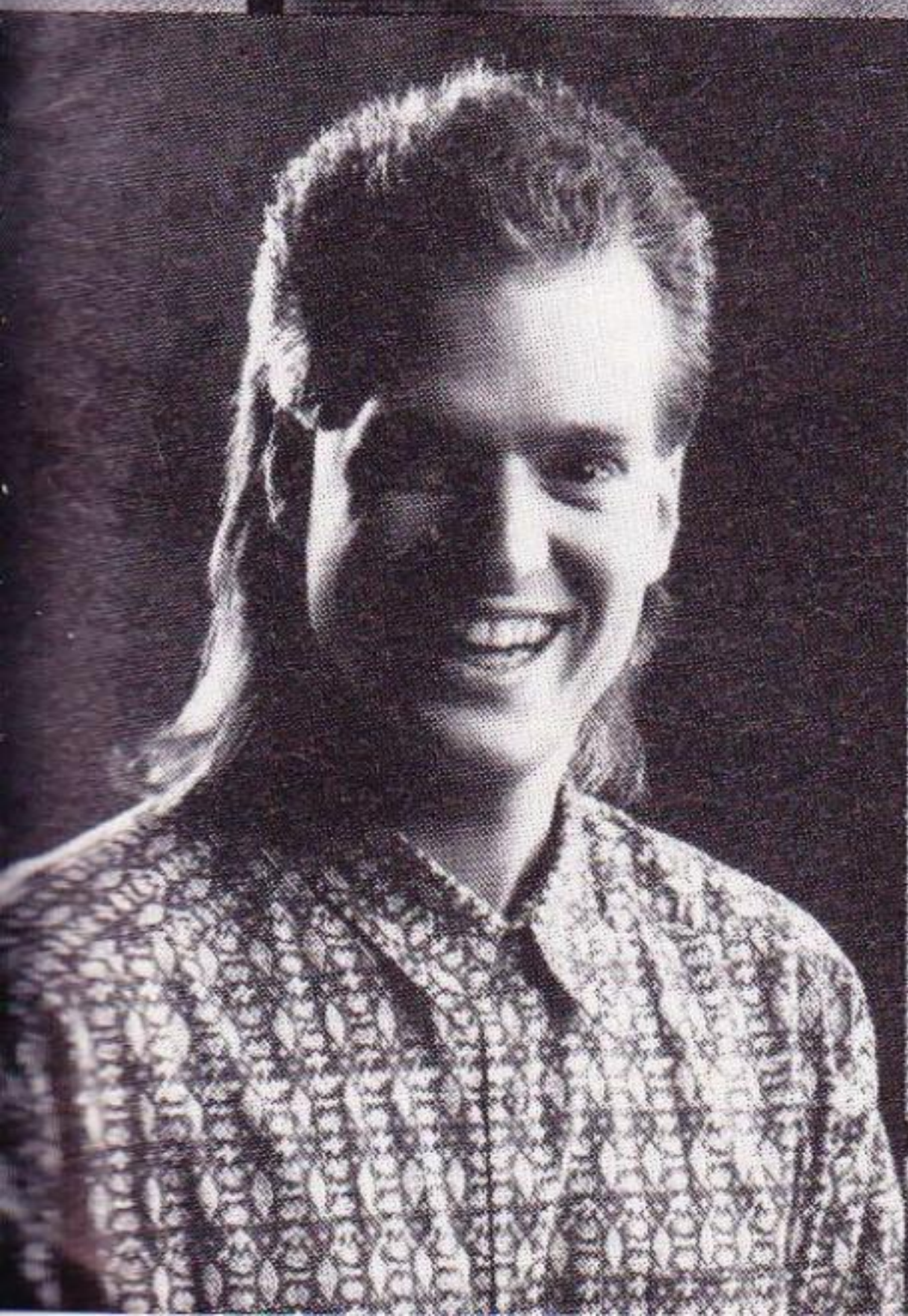
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touch with her too. I've never ministered this way before! It used to be just doing Christian concerts to 99% Christians. I could never in a million years believe that these secular organizations like Pepsi, McDonald's, the government, and the military would be a part of this, but they're paying for us to do it, and it's working. We're ministering the Gospel, man. It's very exciting, but also very hard emotionally."

Siloam has since stopped working with the Canadian government and is focusing on the corporate sponsors. "This time we're treating each show individually, instead of organizing a lengthy and costly tour. I work at drumming up support for each show we do. For example, we're setting up a concert in Ottawa, where I'm at, and Kraft foods is wanting to get involved with the United Way. They want to do a show here in a stadium for 10,000 people. We're doing one in Pennsylvania this month and Pepsi is going to be putting it on."

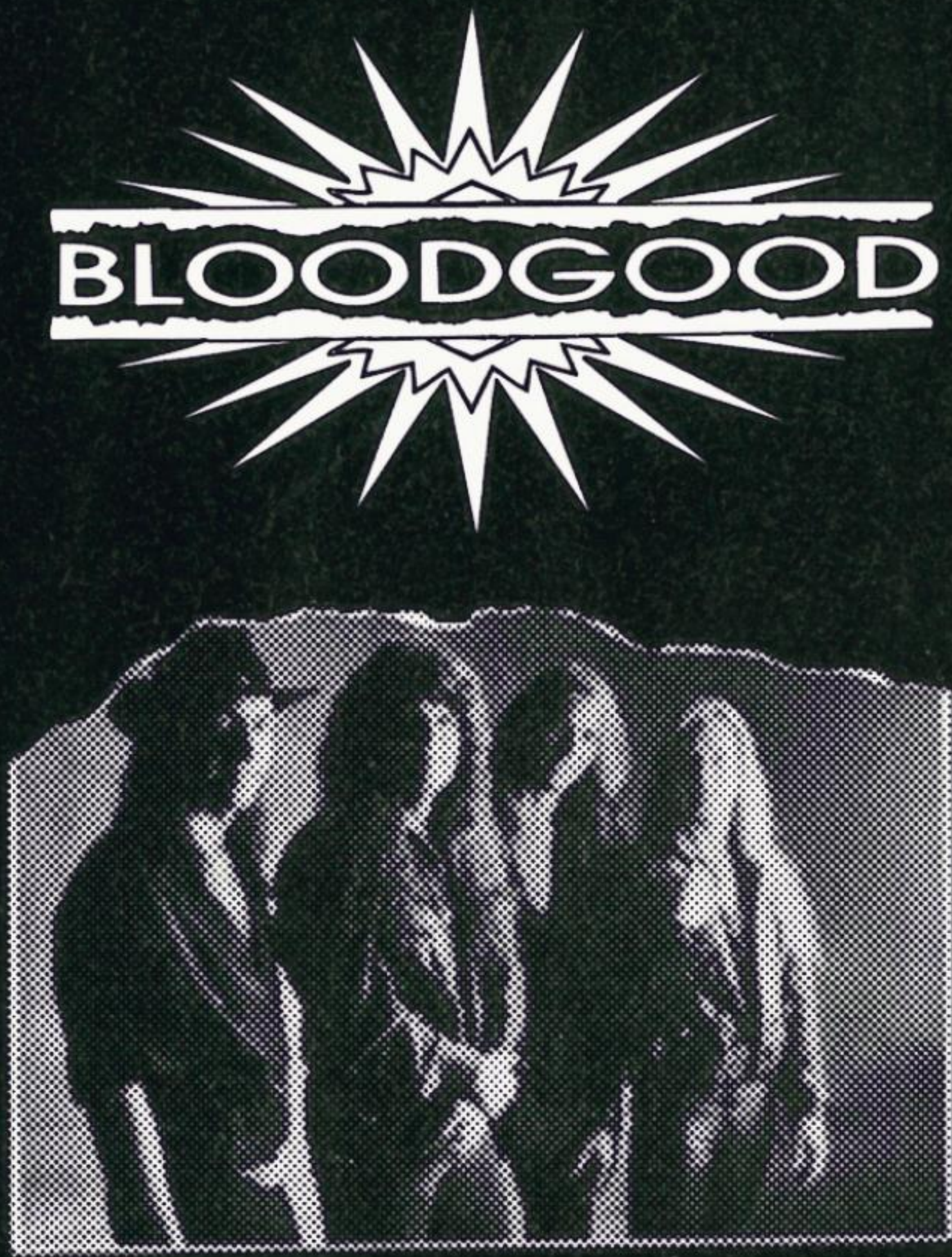
Let's hope that the Lord keeps opening these amazing doors for Siloam to walk through, and that the band receives some good mainstream distribution for its debut album—SWEET DESTINY. "Yeah," agrees Brian. "We've played to over 175,000 people in Western Canada in three months. That's a lot of kids, and they can't find the stuff in the stores." As far as further tours in the U.S., the band is planning an eight-month tour with the Partnership For A Drug Free America and the American School Health Association, "which will probably start just after Christmas."

Pretend **Dig Hay Zoose** is in your living room... No, better not do that. They might make a mess. Let's just say they're talking to you now and explaining the lyrics to their new album, okay?

"**Think About It** talks about how people our age especially have this mistaken idea they're immortal," vocalist Phil explains. "We're not going to live forever. **Struggle Fish** is about looking back on your life, regretting that you didn't take the time to do certain things, or make changes. **Express** communicates how people are sheep. They're searching for something to latch onto. They'll follow anyone or anything."

"**Psychedelic Mommy**," says guitarist Dave Anderson. "Each person has their own ideals that they want to live up to. With Christianity, you have to act on those beliefs. **Waters Way** is dedicated to the Coalition for the Environment. God has made us stewards of His creation. We're all responsible for how we mind our little parcel. Nobody can pass the buck. **Dad Song** reminds me how we waste so much time quibbling over superficial things. Appearances really have nothing to do with a person's heart. **Love Song** is a 'Twilight Zone' kind of tale about a night-shift janitor who never comes into contact with other people. In his lonely imagination, he invents the perfect woman, who in reality, he'll never find."

"**Slow Serious** discusses what it's like to say, see a violent crime or accident on TV," explains bassist Bil, "and then actually be walking on the street and see it happen, or become a part of it. People are so desensitized. They think, 'Wow, it's not like on television!'"



BLOODGOOD

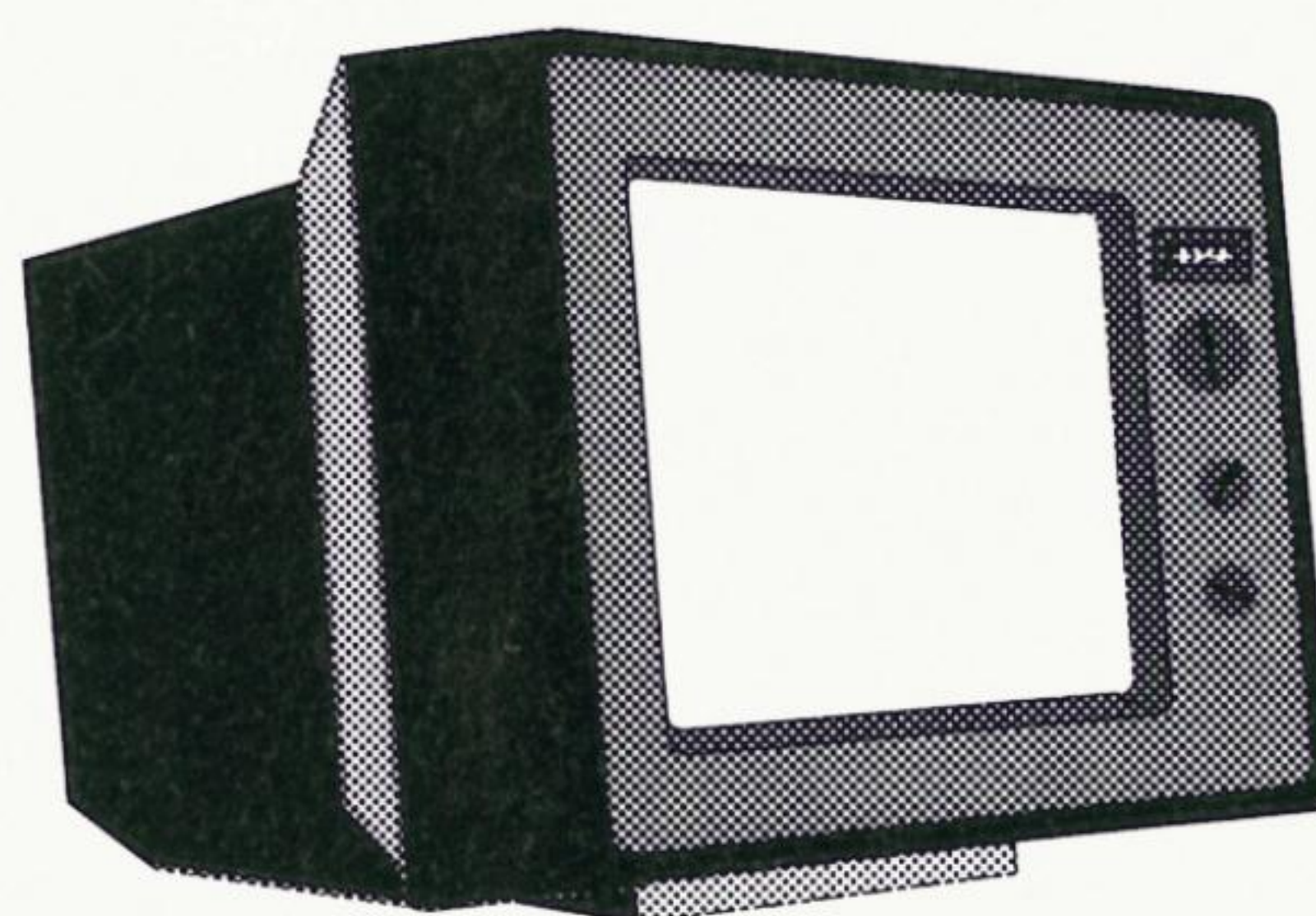
ALL STAND TOGETHER
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BROKEN
Again

D.H.Z. was actually written about our friends in the Crusade band Hot Pink Turtle; we just exchanged their initials for ours. What's funny is, we're so close to those guys, that in a way, it describes us just as well. **Zeptune**: I was in the 'off-again' part of a relationship, and a friend suggested I read the book of Job, if I wanted to know what real problems were! **Brighter Days** was written in about 15 minutes; a real God-given song about appreciating all that's around you." **HM**

VIDEO



WATCH

"**Carry On Wayward Son**" by Rachel Rachel is the hottest cut off the band's debut album. The gutsy performance of the Kansas mega-hit is filmed here with a humorous twist and a friendly introduction of the members of this five-piece. It starts off with someone going through a used record store and pulling out the Kansas **LEFTOVERTURE** album. Kansas guitarist Kerry Livgren, the song's author, not only makes a cameo appearance, but is the main character of the story line. Once the album cover is shown, the lyric sheet with Kerry's photo is

pulled out, and then the song begins, showing the girls harmonizing the intro chorus and then lots of concert footage and a "stranger" walking through an alley (guess who). This figure makes his way into the concert venue and to the front of the stage, where shocked singer Cheryl Jewel sees him and invites him up for the song's blazing solo. Cool idea. The video works, yet doesn't blaze new trails.

"**Power Of Love**" by Guardian is a busy video showing off the energy of this power outfit. This one's been on MTV's "Headbanger's Ball"—and it deserves to be. These guys got the licks and the looks to impress. Although shot in your typical heavy metal video warehouse, I've never seen a band use giant cable spools as a drum riser before. The director did a good job of showing wide shots and multiple views of more than one person during the big chorus lines. Let's hope this one takes the band to a broader audience.

"**Never Say Goodbye**" is an excellent video that should be held back until the previous video lives out its life on MTV, and then released to MTV's Dial MTV contests and, due to the Eagles-like flavorful steel guitar, to TNN and CMT, and literally everywhere else, save for BET. It's a great tune, and features quite a lot of feeling. Several scenes from the Los Angeles Mission feeding line, kitchen and dining hall. Some of the "dark shots" of Jamie Rowe and Tony Palacios sharing the studio microphone are a shade too dark, and the frequent glimpses of drummer Karl Ney seem to show an actor nervous in front of the camera, but the black and white feel of this color video really make a visual compliment to the song. **HM**

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FRIDAY DECEMBER 27 As We Head Into A New Year, Please Pray For Renewal And Unity In The Church. Pray That Our Fervor To Reach The Lost Is Matched With The Desire To Work Together To Achieve The Lord's Work In The World.

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DELIVERANCE “WHAT A JOKE”

Intense

I have waited with baited breath for this release. Deliverance weighs in at a solid 8 on the Richter scale with WHAT A JOKE (in my opinion their best release to date). Their self-titled debut showcased a young melodic bunch, while their sophomore effort WEAPONS... featured a more technical side. SO, the progression to a heavy (and I do mean heavy) level seemed natural.

Guitarist George Ochoa definitely belongs to the chugga-chugga school of guitar, a sonic high-five goes out to his licks and style—very tight and precise. Drummer Kevin Lee and bassist Mike Grato lay down a base beat so tremendously heavy, you couldn't peel it off the floor with a spatula. Singer Jimmy Brown II transcends all previous efforts, his vocal range easily matches Queensryche's Tate or Priest's Halford (and sounds like it, too).

(Special note: Anyone listening to Anthrax, Pantera, Sepultura, Flotsam & Jetsam, or Vio-Lence is highly recommended to snag a copy of WHAT A JOKE. It's a close match and I guarantee you'll like it a whole lot better.)

Besides the painfully short songs; CHEESEBURGER MAKER DU, J.P.D., and HAPPY STAR (this one is so short you wanna say 'scuse you) all come in at a hefty 28 seconds. J.I.G. flies at ya at a rapid-fire data-dat dat, while CHIPPED BEEF unloads an entire recipe on ya, cookable at your convenience. The jewel, though, is SILENT NIGHT. The acoustic intro is quickly replaced by—yes—you guessed it, a speed metal version. Not that these guys are getting predictable (the cover shot is the band giving you dirty looks, while the reverse is of the guys cutting up), they are far from it. Matter of fact, I'd say they're way ahead of their time. (Rebecca Bullock)

HOLY SOLDIER “LAST TRAIN”

Myrrh

How can Holy Soldier top Favorite Metal Album (CCM 1990 Reader's Poll) on their debut album? It's easy, just put out their second album. This new release LAST TRAIN comes rollin' down the track laden with, yes, good metal, and yes, good hard rock; but what delivers the most on this album is just great rock sensibilities. The production (David Zaffiro again) is big and juicy, the mix of styles and content of songs shows a maturity that is definitely welcome in the Christian music arena, and the musicianship comes at you like a runaway locomotive.

Hi-lights are definitely **Hallows' Eve**, which showcases vocalist Steven Patrick's gutsy and wide range throat, the guy has got the pipes! The next tune to mention puts them in the record book as the first Christian band to cover a Rolling Stones song, they nail **Gimme Shelter** (even though Steve's lips aren't near as large as Mick's). You've got to hear this one, what a treat, and as in the original, the background vocals (Jackie Gouche on this version) put the emotional drive and punch to it. **Tuesday Mourning** is a haunting song on the loss of a mother. Patrick's vocals show sensitivity and

ALBUM REVIEWS

then transform by the end into a pseudo-Queen feel.

Thru-out the album bassist Andy Robbins and drummer Terry “how does he play with baseball bats?” Russell more than hold their own, but of course what comes cutting thru is the double guitar assaults of Jamie Cramer and Scott Soderstrom (replacement for Michael Cutting). Give Zaffiro some credit here also because the guitars have “tones thru the bones”. You want proof? Just listen to the opening riffs on **Fairweather Friend**, it's worth the price of admission right there.

For you pop-power-ballad types looking for a sweet song to play at your wedding, check out **Love Is On The Way**. The album ends with one of the strongest tunes, the title track, **Last Train**, a moody tune with a classic rock feel that shows you the versatility and musicianship I've been talking about. This is one good album. Rush out and get the tape or CD and get ready for the concert; Holy Soldier's LAST TRAIN is right on track...and it's headin' your way! (Bruce Adolph)

BLOODGOOD “ALL STAND TOGETHER”

Broken (Again)

I've been a Bloodgood fan since their debut release way back in '86, and the one thing that has always impressed me about the band is their lyrical maturity. They've never compromised their stand for Christ, and their music has always proven them to be one of the best in Christian metal.

With the release of their fifth studio album, ALL STAND TOGETHER, though, Bloodgood has put themselves in a class all their own. While not quite as heavy as DETONATION or their self-titled debut, ALL STAND TOGETHER is definitely their best effort to date.

This 12-song tape kicks off with a real hot song called **S.O.S.** (Save Our Souls), and from there goes through a variety of different songs that take you from ballads like **Say Goodbye**, radio-oriented songs like **Help Me**, and real hot jammers like **Kingdom Come** and **Escape From The Fire**.

Bloodgood signing to a new label was apparently a real smart thing to do. The production is excellent. Les Carlsen's voice sounds better than it ever has, Paul Jackson shows a lot of maturity with the guitar, and the bass... Well, what can you say, Mike's one of the best. Even keyboards were used on the album, but with the Sacred Warrior approach—they're only to enhance, not dominate. Hats off to guest keyboardist Tim Heintz!

The only downer about ALL STAND TOGETHER is that I wish it could have been a little heavier. While the song **I Want To Live In Your Heart** is good, you'd swear that they got the tapes mixed up and put Foreigner's **I Want To Know What Love Is** on by accident.

Thank you, Bloodgood. You've always been a real boost to me in my walk with the Lord, and with ALL STAND TOGETHER you've shown me that, when times get tough, we should all do just that. (Jeff Lott)

SACRED WARRIOR “OBSESSIONS”

Intense

Most groups that are fortunate enough to still be around to put out a fourth album have been playing together long enough to tell whether or not the band can grow in expanding its musical horizons. Having seen Sacred Warrior (a year and a half ago) live, and having reviewed WICKED GENERATION (a year ago), I can't help but to sit here and feel that this band has horizons beyond their comprehension!

This senior effort entitled OBSESSIONS is quite impressive. The album has a more overall melodic overtone than the previous albums, but maintains the hard edge Sacred Warrior is known for. There is a feel of artistic flair in the song structures and the last cut on the disk, **Mad Man**, displays it very well. Containing a wall of sound with guitars, vocals, drums, and acoustic guitar, but each has its own place where they come through and shine, which gives the song a lot of incredible dynamics that takes you through peaks and valleys.

Sweet Memories, Turning Back, and **Remember Me** are three power ballads that are highly emotional and explosive. Remember Me is the account of the thief on the cross next to Jesus. “I turned my head to see Your face/You don't deserve this cheap disgrace/When You leave here, let me follow/Please remember me.”

Stepping up the pace, I found myself head slamming to the guitar blazing and double kick endeavors, such as **Fire From Heaven**, which speaks of the destructive road that America is on. “If Sodom and Gomorrah came to a fiery end/What makes you think that this place will stay in God's right hand?” Very eye opening lyrics, which are based on truth. Rey Parra's vocals are not only powerful, but now have a more smoother flow, which he controls very nicely. Bruce Swift and (newcomer) John Johnson not only show technique and great riffs, but show that maturity and subtleties are the difference between a good album and a great one! Tony Velasquez is once again very impressive in remaining solid throughout the album, along with bassist Steve Watkins.

In closing, it seems the band really reached within themselves and brought forth honesty and integrity to this album and in my opinion, I believe this band has the capability of one day putting out albums equal to or above Queensryche's MINDCRIME and EMPIRE. (Joey Knight)

REZ “CIVIL RITES”

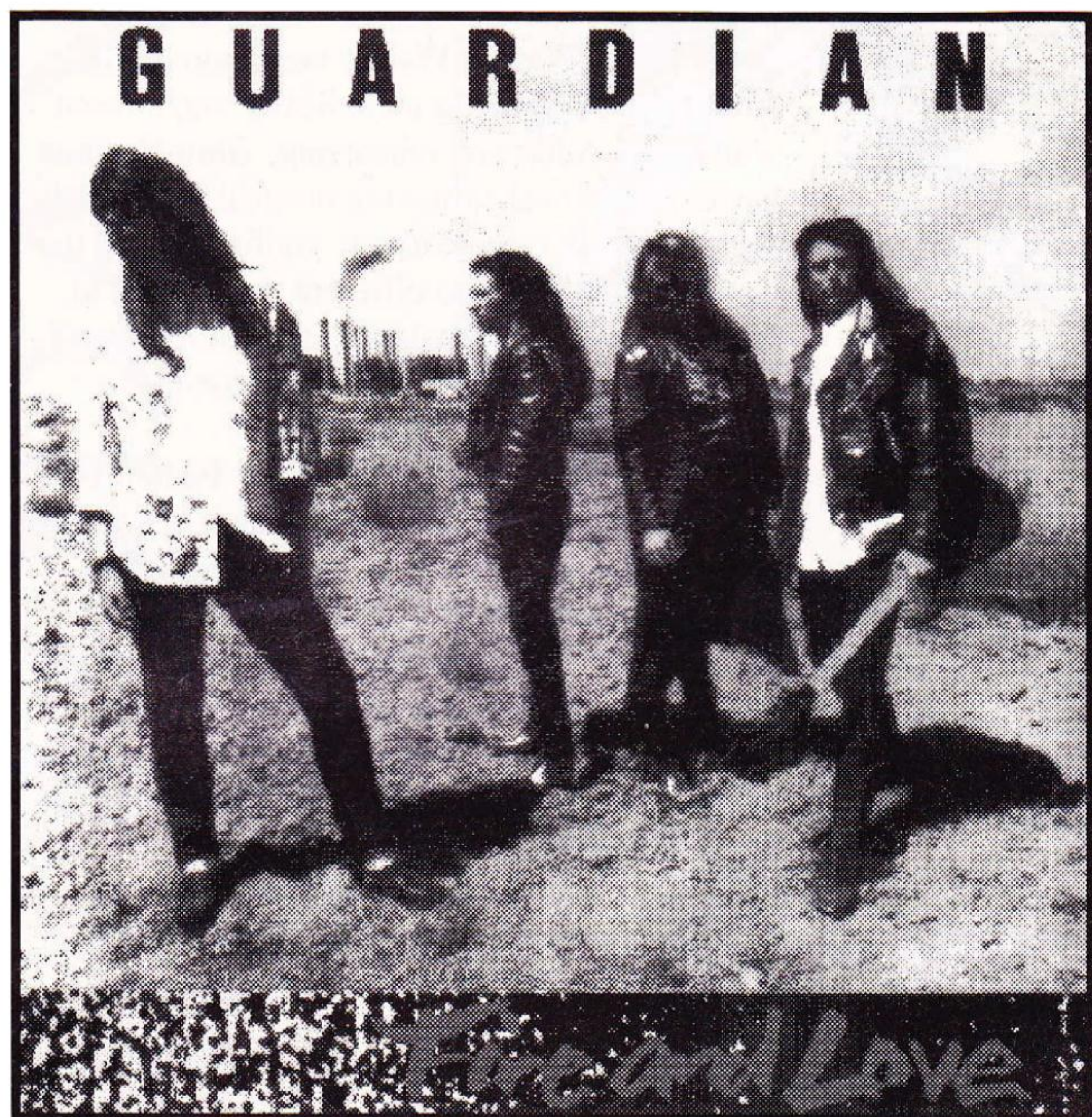
Grrr

REZ plays a blue collar man's rock. It's good to listen to while you're workin'. I was on my back porch recently, assembling a shelf unit, and I put the latest REZ disc on. At first listen, I thought, “Gosh, these folks are real hard rock dinosaurs, yet further listens uncovered some real-live youthful energy.

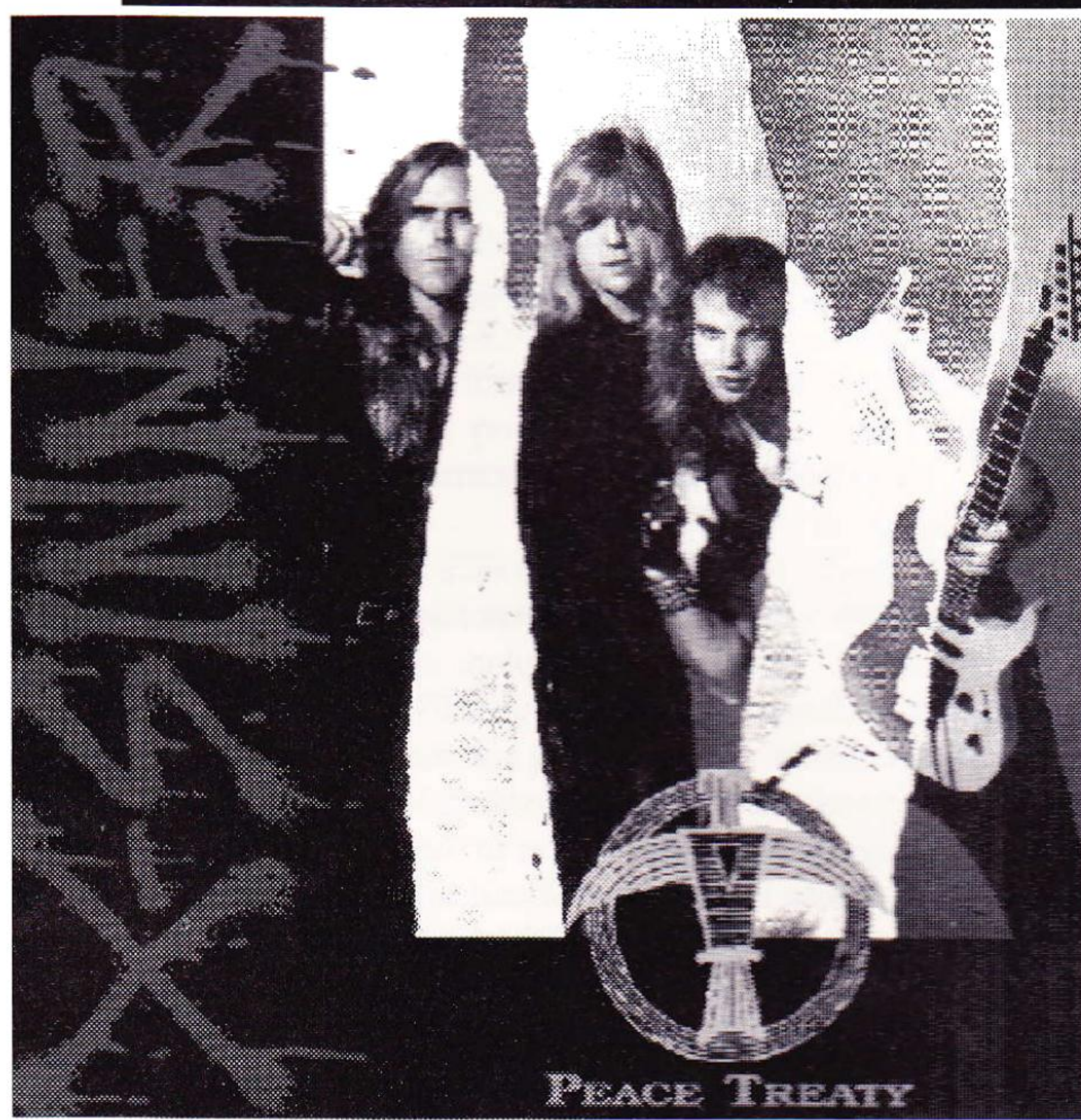
Continuing in the vein of the rousing INNOCENT BLOOD album, these tunes lay low in a heavy blues rock with that lovely amount of grit and distortion. There's no tunes here that stop you dead in your tracks and leave you speechless (save for maybe **Lincoln's Train**) and

POWER

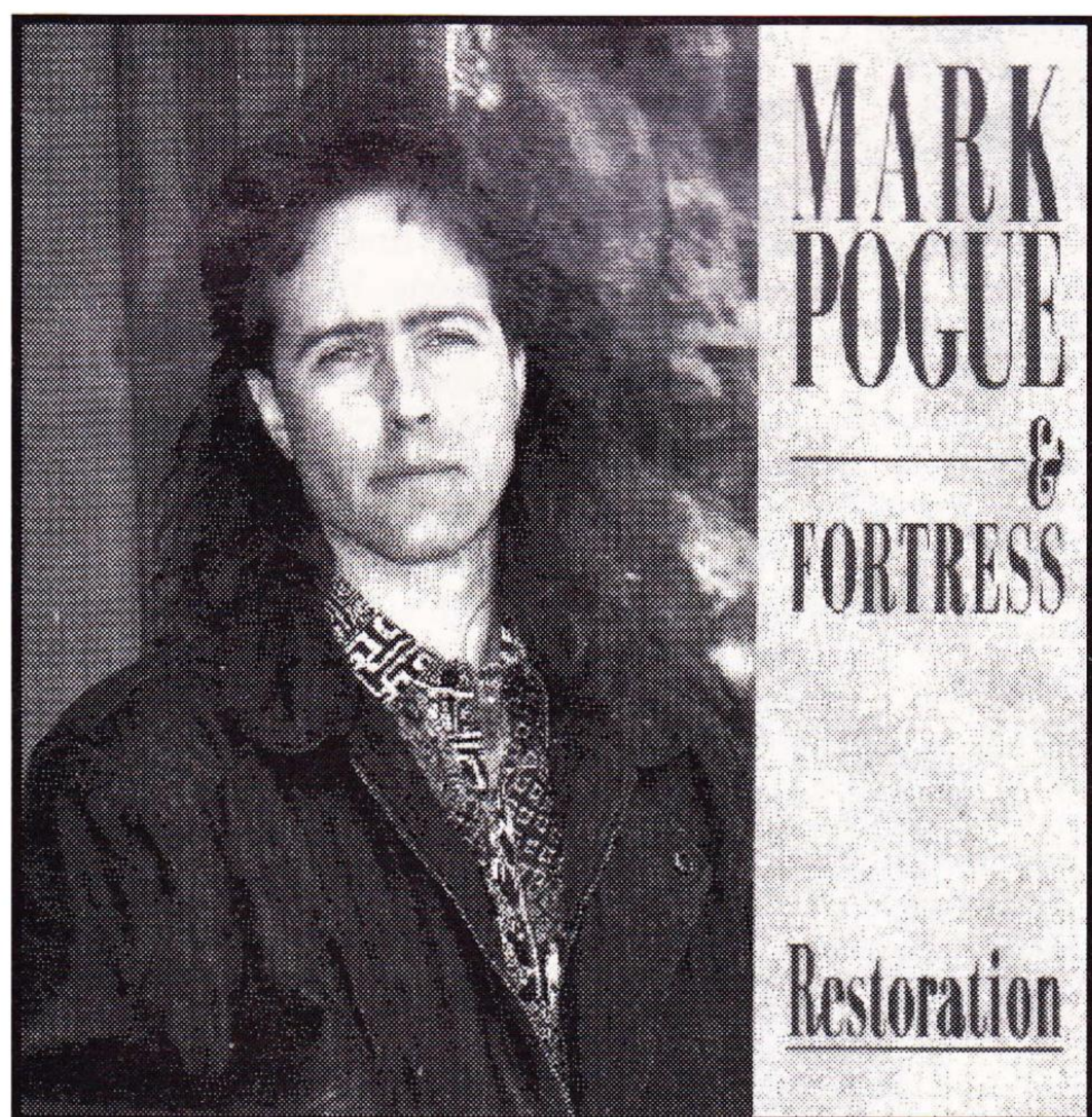
FOR THE PEOPLE



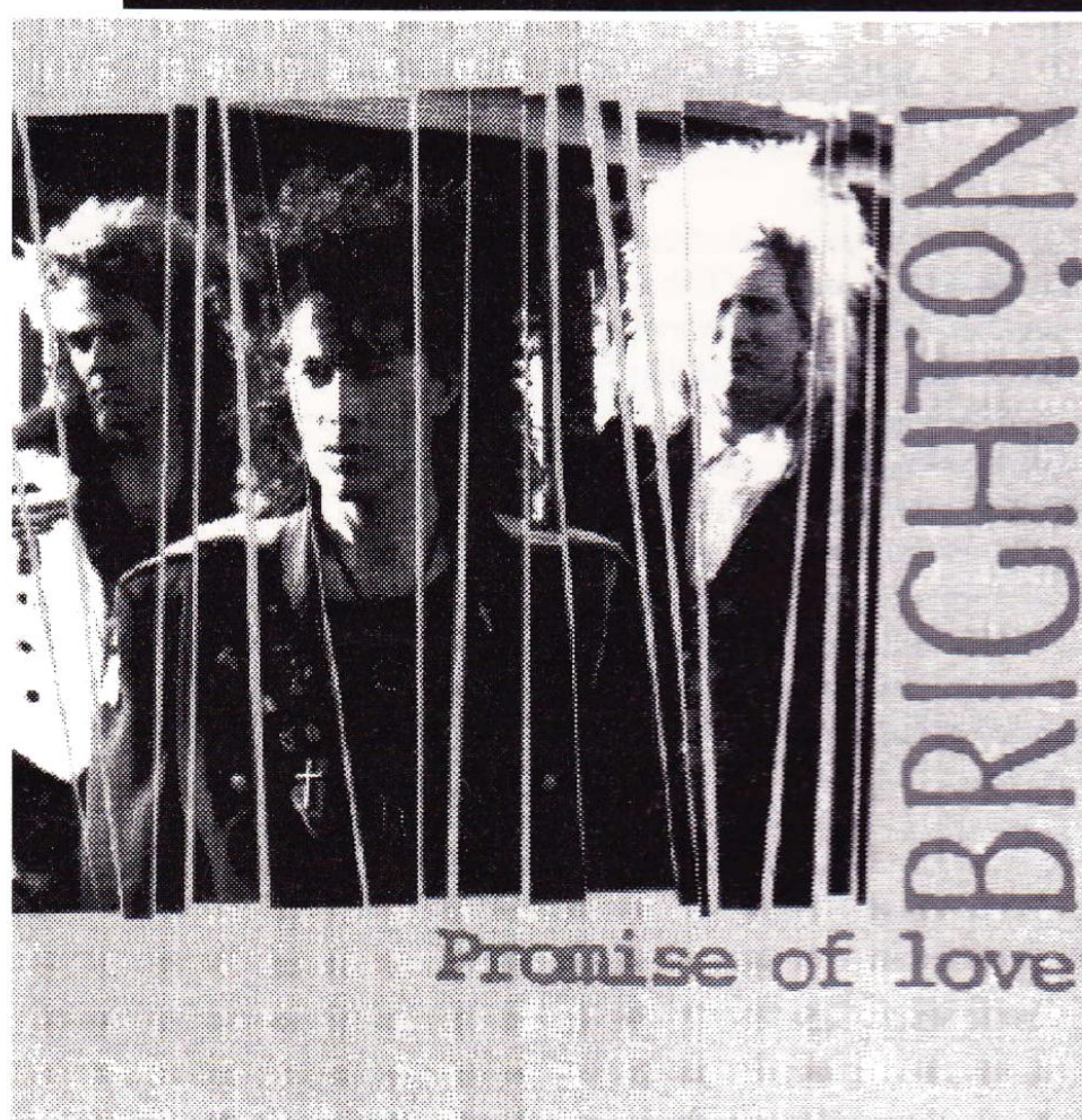
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you won't find a riff here that hasn't been rehashed and used before, but it's got attitude and, to steal a line from The Pig, it gets your "feet to movin' and your soul to groovin'."

One pleasant surprise is the melody lines written for Wendy Kaiser's vocals on tunes like **Death Machine** and **Comatose**, which sound like they belong, not strained or out of her strongest range. **Players** begins with the plodding low end reminiscent of Pink Floyd's **Dogs Of War**, and sports some cutting lyrics concerning young love and lust games: "If love is a teacher, why's it so hard to learn? Tell me, is it better to marry than to burn?"

Lincoln's Train is the album's highlight, much in the same vein as **Shadows** from HEAVEN AND HELL, except this one leans harder to the acoustic end. It's about a black man watchin' Lincoln's casket-filled train go by and wondering why he's still no freer today than he was before the Civil War. Very moving.

Hotfootin' lives up to its name, sweatin' out good ole blues rock a la Aerosmith—using some mean harmonica and pitting Glenn's voice against Wendy's to achieve a spicier texture. The Jefferson Airplane classic **Somebody To Love** is covered here with Wendy taking full control of the old hit and breathing fresh passion and grit into it, yet the shrill high end of the original still sounds better to these ears. **In My Room** is a cool ballad with some excellent acoustic pickin' and lead playin' that would command a guitarist's attention with respect. Glenn pouts about the four-walled prison cell that a child in a fighting family's bedroom becomes. Lyrically this song should touch a lot of people due to its universal experience of shutting yourself away.

If you haven't had your musical meat and mashed potatoes lately, **CIVIL RITES** will getcha your fill. (Doug Van Pelt)

KEN TAMPLIN "SOUL SURVIVOR"

Intense

More commercial hard rock from Mr. Hook—Ken Tamplin. This time around the songs are fuller sonically. A couple of the tunes, **Media Mania** and **Stand Up** show a Delta blues/boogie direction. Ken's fascination and skill with vocals are again showcased, where he's shown growth with each album. **Live Forever** and **Hard Times Comin'** are two good examples, with harmonies splitting the stereo mix as the intro for one and the outro for the other.

Midnight 'N Peru is a Tamplin-penned acoustic instrumental duet between Ken and Scott Van Zen. It's hot enough to fit right in with an Al Dimeola and John McLaughlin jam. **Stay By My Side** starts off with a melody similar to **Here Comes The Sun**, and then slips into a keyboard-laced melodic rocker. **Come And Save Me** is one of many good songs, but this one stands a little bit taller due to the hot lead guitar playing by Van Zen. It's one of the heavier tunes on the album too. **Live Forever** is another highlight, incorporating several methods of drilling a musical phrase into your memory, including diminuendos, vocal harmony textures, mimicking guitar leads, and cool percussion additives. Each time the chorus comes around, it's delivered in a different way.

Loves Eternal Road may be the best

tune he's written. A full-sounding ballad, it incorporates tons of influences and instruments (including an orchestra), and could easily win hearts over the radio.

Lyrically, Tamplin is writing like he's used to. He makes his ideas and points known, but not wrapped up in the Christianese/theology 101 language. Much like his Magdallan tunes, where he attacks myths and the ridiculous thinking of some non-believers, a tune like **Media Mania** blasts away at the misuse of information power.

This is a good album with a myriad of influences and it only gets better with each listen. It's the best work Tamplin has released thus far, and that's truly saying a lot. This man takes his solo projects seriously, and he does a great job. It's too good to ignore, more mature than most Christian-marketed music, yet still misses that knockout punch by a few decibels—and I can't explain why. (Doug Van Pelt)

LOVE LIFE GOODBYE LADY JANE

Blonde Vinyl

After seeing Love Life perform live last Spring, I was geared up for the release of its debut album. With this quartet's brand of "dirty" commercial metal a la Skid Row, I thought the band could take off like the first Whitecross record. While not a bad record, I was disappointed upon first listen. My high expectations for this year's best new metal band wasn't met. The production of the guitar tones holds the first cut back a bit, but the infectious hook of **Do You Love Me** is so big and so good that the thin production is forgotten in favor of spinning around the room with an air guitar slung low over my shoulder (I hope nobody saw me!)

Real Love starts off with a cliched "ooh-yeah," and the guitar tones are cheesy, but this song as well has a good hook. **Hearts On Fire** showcases Larry Worley's voice. It's a boy/girl song expressing the feelings of romance/passion. **When Loneliness Comes Knockin'** is a slower acoustic-based tune with a strong vocal melody. **Girl Gone Bad** is another cool tune, but one with an often-overused hook a la Motley Crue. **Fill-Er Up** is a nice little screamin' lead break to get this vehicle going. The title track is a rockin' anthem, as is the sassy **Do You Believe In Love**, and **In Blue Again** is a major chord/happy tune. **1000 Reasons** starts acoustically with a Poison feel, and then features some pretty guitar picking. **Hard Day's Night** shows up here as a rockin' version without the vocal harmonies that The Beatles used.

One thing that I think holds this album back is also the thing that holds it together. The same-ness of each cut, although they do cover different sounds, keep the songs from standing as strong as it would on its own outside the context of this record. These songs are good, period. When you buy the album, expect it to grow on you. Once it does, you'll probably agree that it's hot. (Doug Van Pelt)

DIG HAY ZOOSE "STRUGGLE FISH"

Brainstorm

Yowza! They're here! Those Midwest Funk Rats called Dig Hay Zoose have released its psycho-metal to the sanctified masses. This stuff is great! I'd be glad to recommend this music to any modern day rocker.

It's right there with the current blend of altermo-metal, the stuff college radio loves.

Zeptune is the first tune that made me "hit the floor" when hearing the band's demo tape. It didn't strike me then that this was a funky version of Led Zeppelin's **Kashmir**. The chorus belts out a heart-felt message from one to another: "I forgive you for the things you've done." **Think About It** starts things off on this disc with romping bass and swirling melodies on top of chopping rhythms. **Psychedelic Mommy** comes in next with a very fast and snapping 'n' funky pace. **Waters Way** is very moody, like Jim Morrison swaying melodically into a room with Jane's Addiction rehearsing. **Slow Serious** has Phil the vocalist making musical sense of the lyrics with his voice control: wailing during the lines "Suddenly it was different...you begin to scream!" and carefully letting the words lift off his lips as he meanders "I'd never flown an airplane, high across the skies."

The title track, **Struggle Fish**, drives hard, whipping along at a headbanging pace. **Dad Song** seems to release a lot of pain and anger. "Who am I now, Dad?" Could it be about guitarist Dave Anderson's struggle to please a father's expectations opposite to the lifestyle he chose? The band even tackles the standard ballad challenge, and does it well with the aptly-titled **Love Song**.

This is the conclusion of the interview, where I wrap up all my contents into one punchline of a sentence. See Spot run. (Doug Van Pelt)

SILOAM "SWEET DESTINY"

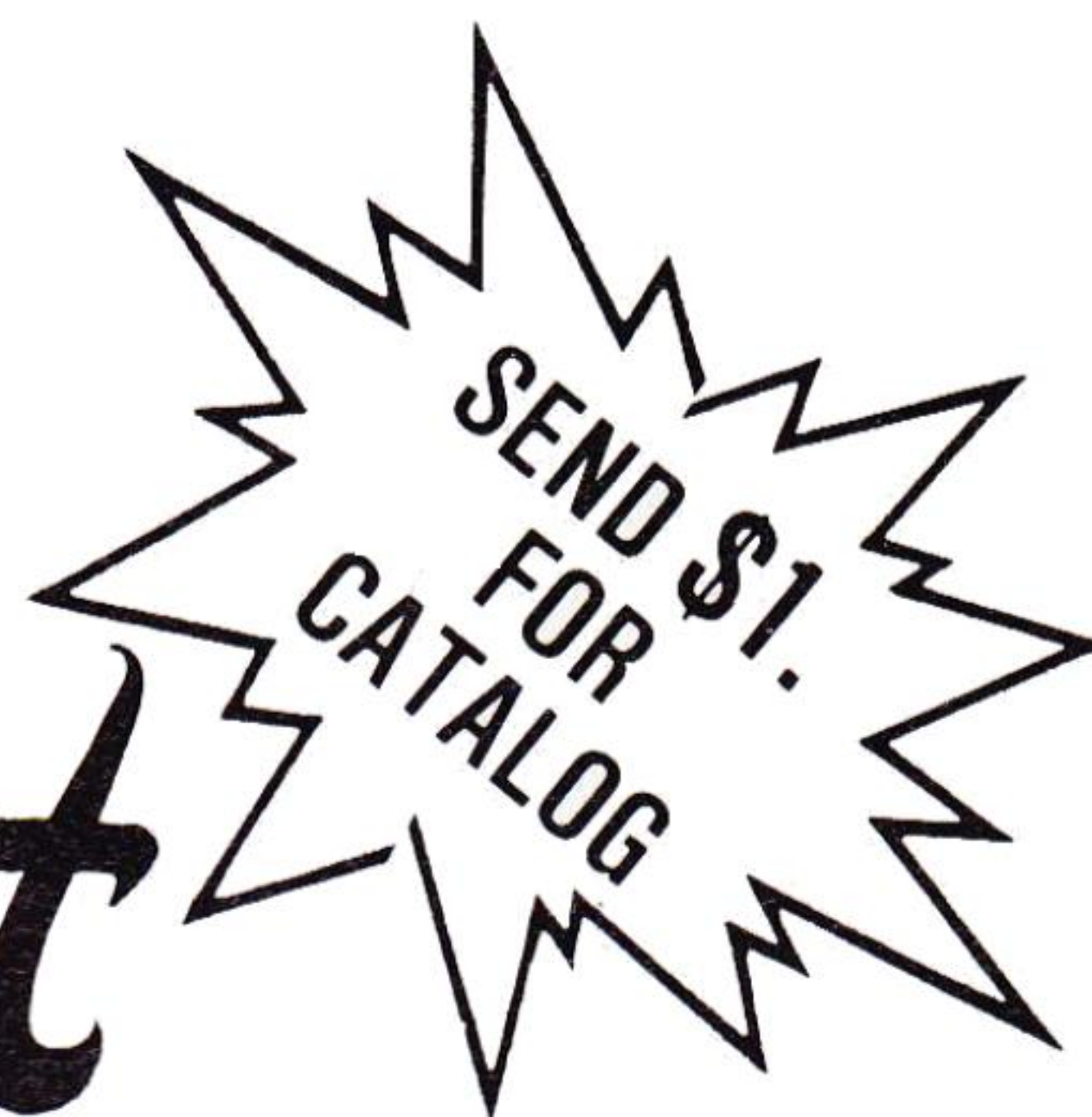
Image 7 Rocks

Here's a classy melodic hard rock album that can stand up to the world's music standards. These Canadian rockers have really put in a fine debut performance, which can be expected if you knew the trouble drummer Brian Lutes went through to recruit this band. He had a horse ranch that he sold in order to pay for flying out potential musicians from all over the U.S. and Canada for auditions. He wanted to do it right the first time and, by golly, he did!

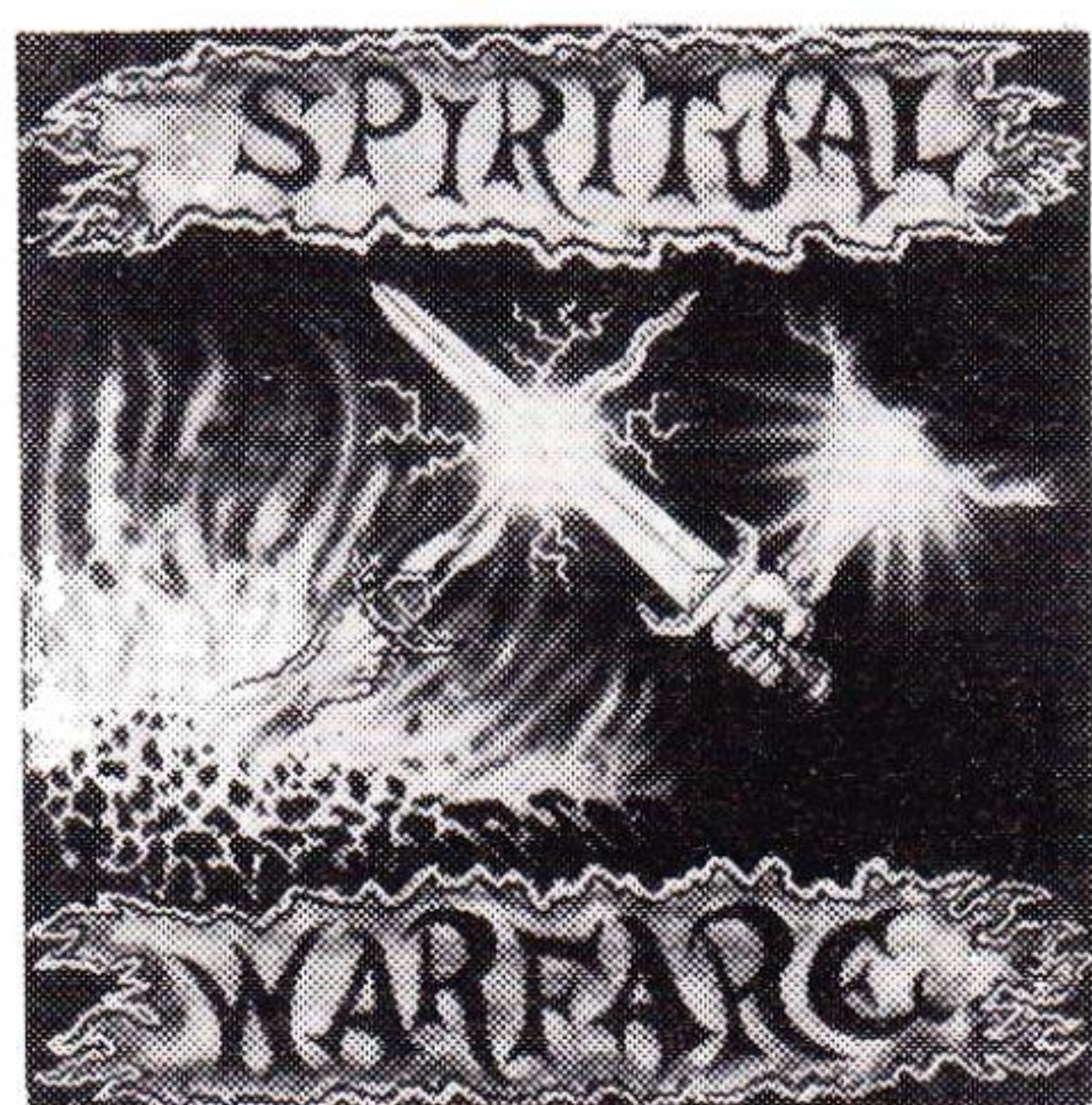
Here I Am Again and **Miss Lizzy** are sassy hard rockers that start the album off with a bang. **Here I Am Again** has a hook as big as Texas that grabs the listener right off. Rip-roaring rockers like **Miss Lizzy** and **Lethal Lady** have enough guts to rock the metalhead, and that Siloam touch of Bon Jovi-like commercialism to really win a broad radio-raised audience.

The guitar work on the disk shows teamwork and cooperation with the song structures, but also impresses when it's time to stand alone or fill a lead spot. The keyboards tackle a varied sound approach, which keeps the music fresh and top-notch. Sometimes it swells with melodic feeling, and other times it's jamming with a Hammond organ sound.

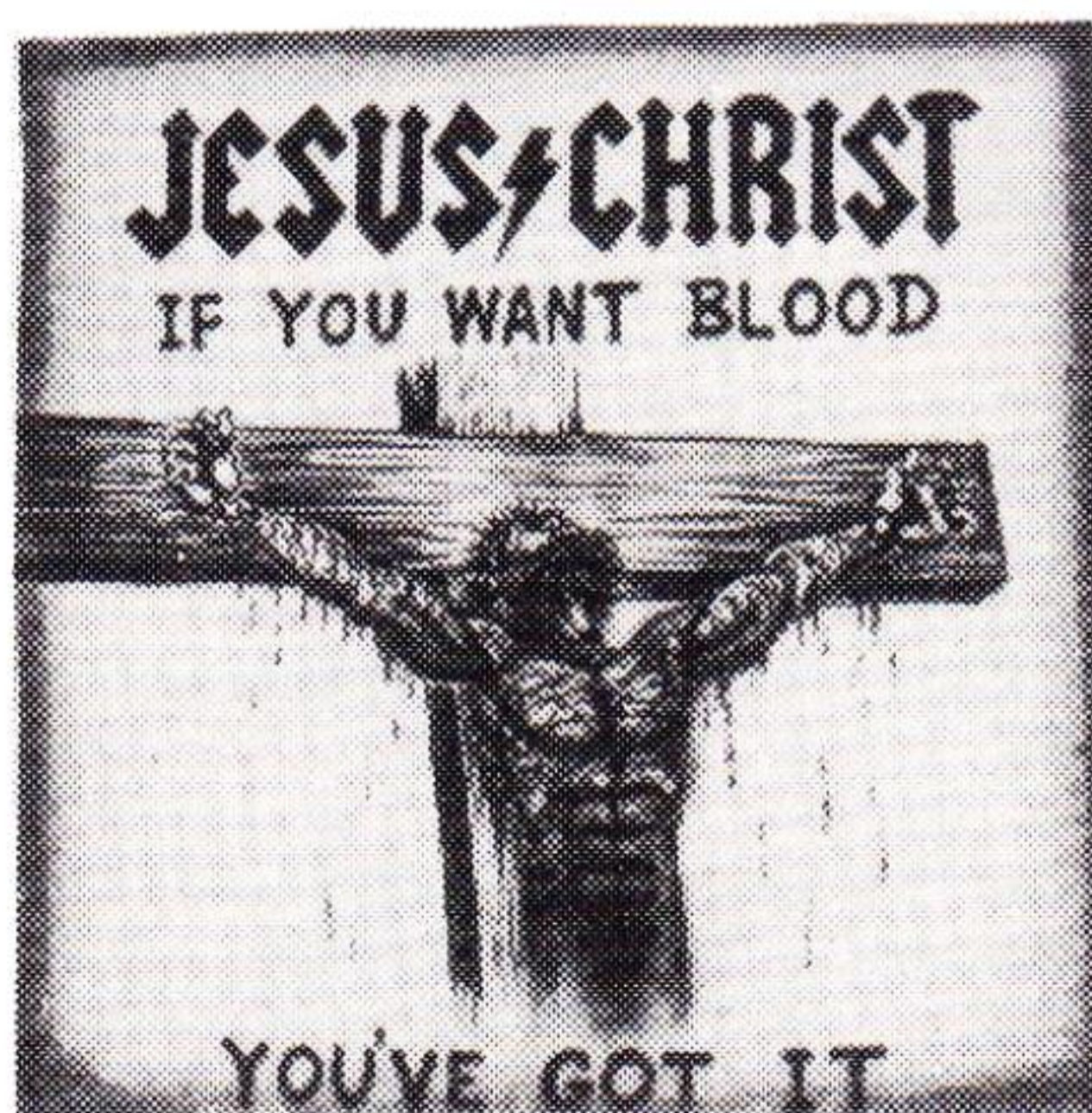
When it comes to music like this, it requires a vocalist whom the music can rely on. Lee Guthrie proves himself as the man for the job with ballads like **Child Of Mine** and **Decent Souls**. He shows lots of voice control and diversity. He does a good job of getting low and melodic, like Dale Thompson, in **After The Fire**, and gets a little raspy/angry in **Eastern Skies** and



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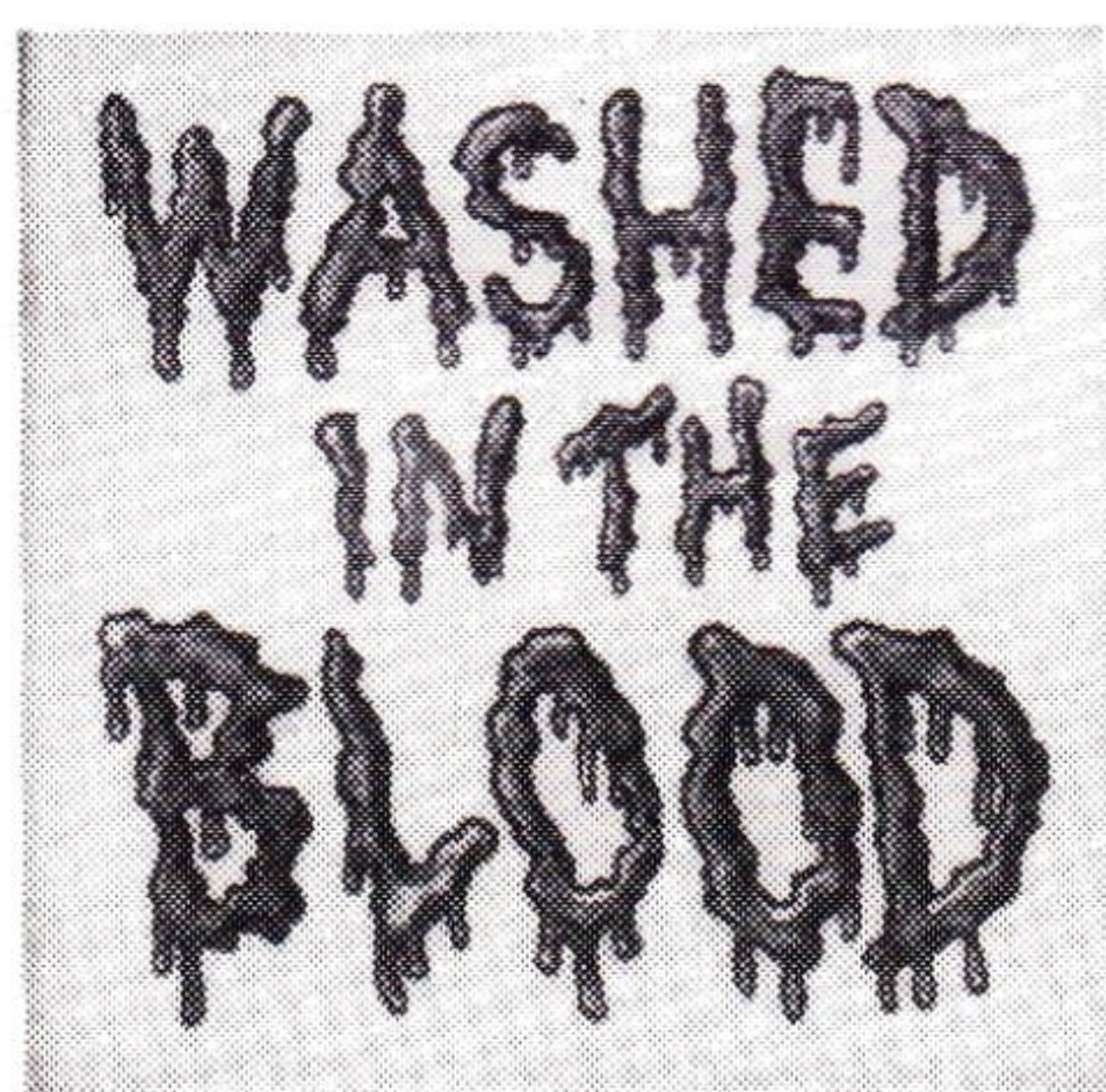
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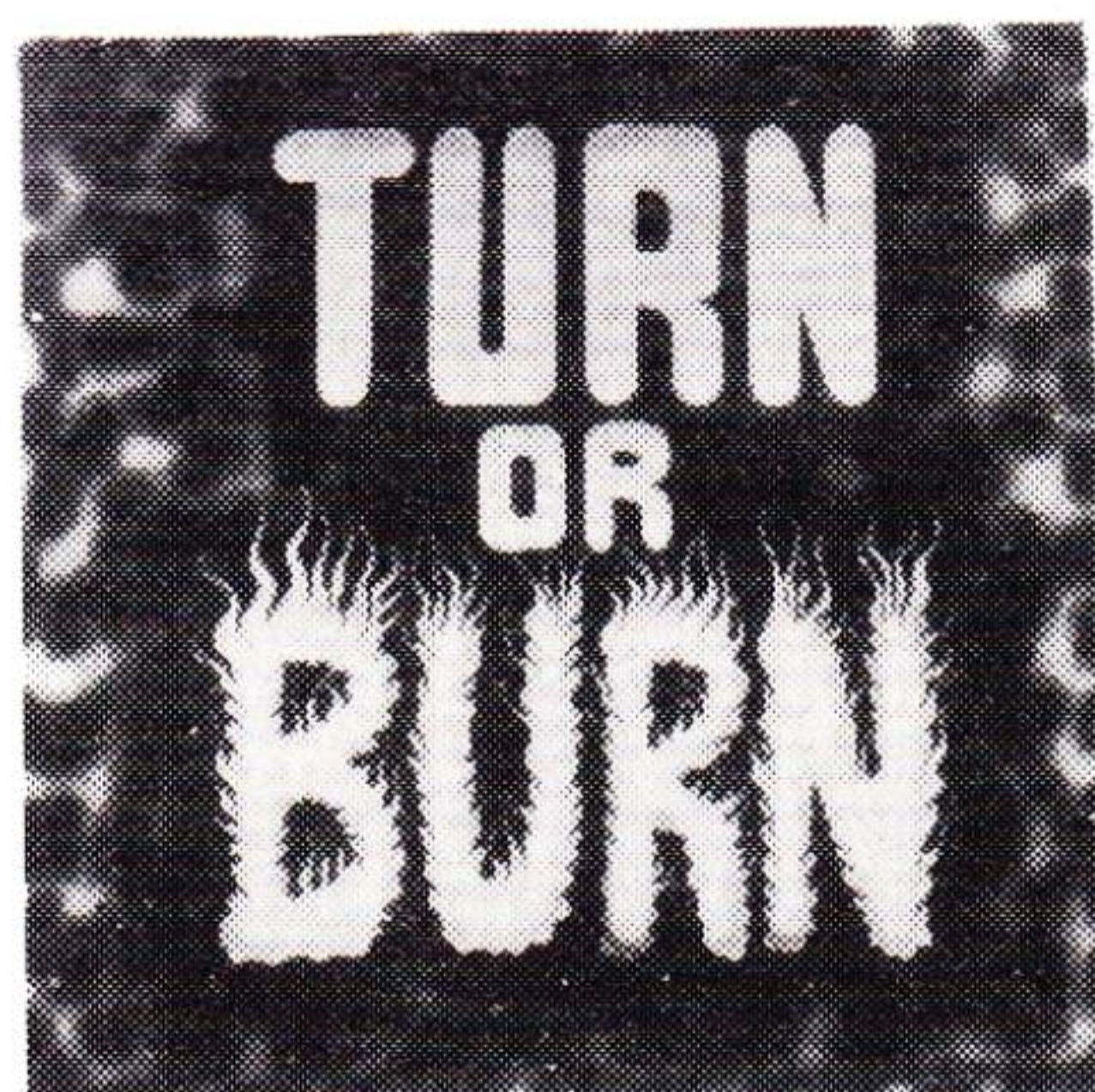
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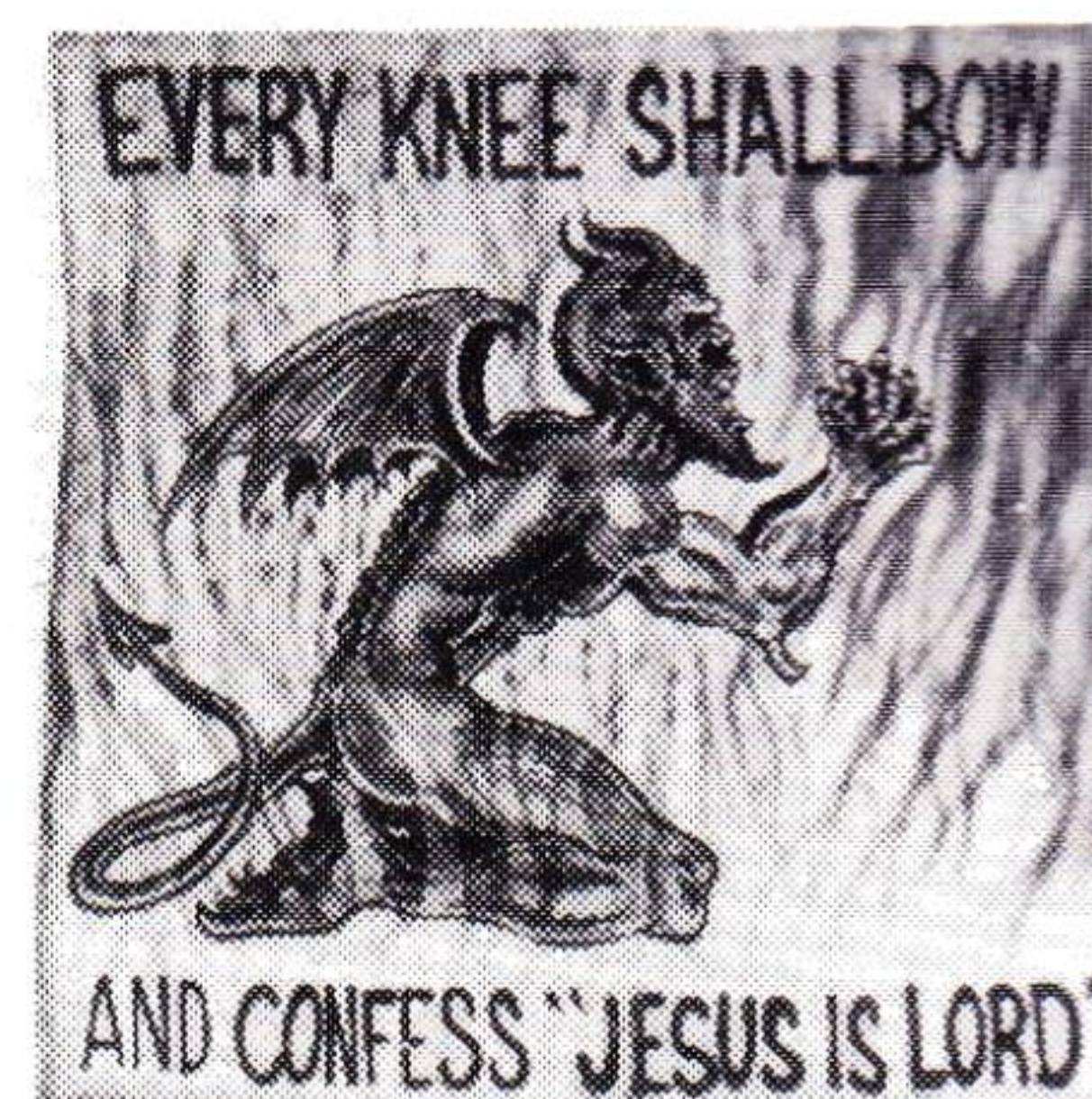
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Deceiver. His voice matches well with the great BGV's of the title track.

This album is good. Producer Frank Levin did a swell job. A lot of thought went into the arrangements and studio "extras." This album and this band deserves the attention that they will get. With a solid debut like this, their destiny is indeed bound to be sweet. (D.V.)

SHADOW WINGS

Regency

Here's a band that's hard to classify. I first heard they were a thrash outfit, and then I saw posters of the band on telephone poles at Cornerstone, which conveyed an eclectic/artsy hard rock image. Then, when I finally hear the tape, it's neither. Blues rock, metal guitar leads, and both male and female lead vocals are what's present here, but no, they don't really sound like REZ. Try imagining Servant with a couple young guitarists in 1991. That's the best reference I can think of, besides the obvious Pat Benatar comparison on the cover of her big hit **Hell Is For Children**.

Although playing a style with lots of plodding low end, the synth-pop keyboard lines written into most of the melodies keep this from truly being a heavy metal sound, yet the crunchy guitars are probably going to keep top-40 fans away as well.

Lyricaly the band is very focused on getting its audience to "put your old life behind you, press into the new" (**Live For The King**). **Finders, Weepers** is a very catchy lyric putting a new twist into the old paradox that "He who loses his life will find it, but he who finds his life will lose it." A really cool ending is the spoken prayer of repentance, making this album a useful tool in closing the transaction of redemption with someone.

Besides the spirited version of **Hell Is For Children**, the guitar leads of Troy Hillstrom in tunes like **Love's Not A Four-Letter Word** and the intro to **Wake Up**, and also the Believer-clone thrash-style vocals in **No Condemnation** stand out and get noticed.

In conclusion, I see some potential in Shadow Wings, especially Christina Hillstrom's melodic vocals (maybe a mellow/melodic Heart-type direction?), but I would've waited for better material for this debut if I was the producer. (Doug Van Pelt)

ROCK POWER PRAISE VOL. II - "CHRISTMAS HYMNS"

Pakaderm

Much better than Volume One, THE HYMNS. They seemed to keep the reverence inherent in these songs, but just performed them naturally as a heavy band would do. Absolute highlight would be Jamie Rowe (Guardian)'s rendition of **God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen**. Other hot tunes include Sara Tennison's solo in **What Child Is This?**, John Elefante's version of **Silent Night** (yeah!), and **Little Drummer Boy**, which is performed by a kid's choir backed with full-sounding drums and heavy keys and bass. This year will be the closest we've had to a "White metal Christmas." (Doug Van Pelt)

REGIME

Rick Hunter (ex-Soldier)'s new band has put to tape some hard hitting commercial metal, which will be released on a full-length tape this month. The first of the three tunes here is a slightly re-vamped version of **Borderline**, from the LOUDER THAN HELL. Rick's leads are a little more loose and noticeable than his Soldier days, filling in several nooks and crannies here with speed and feeling. **Give Back Your Heart** is a good ballad, and **Waiting For You** is an energized commercial rocker.

If these songs are an indication of the rest of the album, Regime's tape will be worthwhile. To order a copy, send \$8 (plus \$2 shipping) to: Regime, 610 Elysian Fields Dr, Oakland CA 94605. (Doug Van Pelt)

SURRENDER

These three songs show some good songwriting ideas, especially in tunes like **Hideaway**, which has very melodic vocal lines in it and fluctuates between some soft-spoken verses to hook-laden choruses. The drums, bass and guitars are mixed pretty well here. **I Will Survive**, a faster tune, reminds me a little of Triumph.

If these guys keep at it, they'll be fantastic some day. You can obtain a copy of this tape for \$6 to: PO Box 60653, Pasadena CA 91116-6653. (Doug Van Pelt)

FINAL CHAPTER "IT IS WRITTEN"

Taking on a straight-ahead metal sound with lots of vocals, Final Chapter reminds me of early Stryper heavy metal. Aggression is the oil that lubricates this band, from drummer David Osbourn down to the wailing vocals of Tripp Andrews. Of all the progressive metal custom tapes received lately, this one is the most impressive, from the well-written songs to the good sonics to the full-color packaging. The guitar leads of Gary Wilson seem well thought out and they sound good. Equally as impressive is the Latin-influenced bridge during **Come As You Are**.

For a copy of this evangelical tape, send \$7 to: PO Box 22869, Jackson MS 39225. (Doug Van Pelt)

R.I.P. "LIVE"

Rocks In Pink Cement are very raw and energetic, nonsensical, funk-punk at full tilt. Fans of scaterd-few and The Crucified will probably get heavily into tunes like **Skate And Procrastinate**, as long as you don't mind the muffled sound levels.

To order, send \$5 to: 3624 Londonderry Dr, Santa Clara CA 95050. (D.V.)

SANCTIFIED NOISE

"GRAPPLING W/THE ELECTRIC BLOODHOUND"

These noisemakers from Dallas, Texas are back with another gutsy punk release of too-cool for school melodies. By mixing surf-style musical elements into their songs, they make each tune accessible to more than just a hardcore crowd.

Dance Of The Blood Hounds, Grappling, and Visualize Repentance are

highlights, with energy, attitude, and lyrical substance, while **Band Jam** and **Cheese Song** need to be checked out for humorous reasons. The last tune could've been renamed "101 Uses For Cheese." Hilarious.

These guys need to be in every thrasher and punk's collection. For ordering info, write: PO Box 1011, Addison TX 75001. (Doug Van Pelt)

MICHAEL HERO

This one-song tape showcases a good guitarist with feeling in his fingers and a penchant for good songs. His vocals don't match up, which may be helped by using this tape to recruit a top-notch singer. For ordering info, write: M. Hjelte, Edeforsgatan 40, 95142 Lulea, Sweden. (Doug Van Pelt)

REV. SEVEN

"THE UNVEILING"

Okay, okay. We all know that the "Christian" industry has come through with bands that sound like popular secular groups such as: Ratt, AC-DC, Ozzy Osbourne, and... Wait a minute, Ozzy?!? Yes folks! For all you Ozzy-heads comes a band out of Colton, California that has a hot guitar player, a very tight and great sounding rhythm section, and, oh yeah, a singer that sounds like Ozzy! On purpose? I don't know, but I truly enjoy this effort!

Songs included are: **The Hand Of God, Babylon, and Kingdom Come**. The songs are tight and just simply rock you! Excuse me, while I pop this cassette back in my tape deck! To order, send \$7.50 (plus \$1.50 shipping) to: PO Box 54, Colton CA 92324. (Joey Knight)

MACH X

Alright people, fasten your safety belts, we're going to "mach X!" Mega double-bass work with chunky guitar riffs is what awaits you here. Listening to this music sounds like if you crossed Racer X with the thrash "feel" of Deliverance. The singer has a coarse yet unique and powerful voice, having a slight Mike Lee (Barren Cross) feel to it. The music is tight and furious, and in the midst of all this fury is a power ballad that reminds this listener of **Can't Find My Way Back Home** by House Of Lords. Enjoyable stuff dudes. Willis would be proud.

To order, send \$5 to: PO Box 20348, Riverside CA 92516-0348. (Joey Knight)

ZURIEL

Listening to this four-piece pop/rock band, you can hear some promising things happening here. Unfortunately, there are some common stigmas that the band has fallen into. Dry instrumentation and vocals causing an album effort to sound more like a demo. Vocally though, it doesn't hurt it here, because of Tony Royer's well controlled vocals. Tony has a very nice range that tends to sound like John Elefante now and then. Hot spots are a ballad called **Dreams**, and **Fashion Scientific**, which is very reminiscent to an old Robin Trower tune from the 70's. Even though they caught my ears, the album lacked aggressiveness. The music seems to be written for great aggressive sounding guitar, but all we get is some fuzzy tones in the

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background, which tends to get drowned out by keyboards. All in all, if the members of Zuriel start playing with more conviction, I'm sure they could grow into a great sounding band.

For ordering info, write: 1343 Dayton St, Hamilton OH 45011. (Joey Knight)

CINDY TELLS ME

This alternative trio from Arrowsmith, Illinois really is quite an impressive combination. The highlight of this tape is **Shadow Man**. Cindy Tells Me is a band that I personally demand to get signed. Fans of No Laughing Matter and L.S.U. will also agree and go insane over these guys. The production, continuity, and tightness is incredible. Boys, let's hear more, ok?

To order, send \$5 to: D.E. Johnson, RR 1, Box 118, Arrowsmith IL 61722. (Stephen Wagers)

GROANS OF ANIAM

Alright! Cool Christian skate rock from the land of the Doughboys/S.N.F.U. (Canada). This gruesome foursome delivers good tasty skate crunch with melody a la Chemical People/Descendants in a way so that old punks like yours truly can reminisce. Thanks guys, for making me feel old! (Ha!) This being another band that I demand to be signed. Keep skatin' against Satan boys.

For ordering info, write: 188 Cedarbrae Ave, Waterloo, Ontario, CANADA N2L-4S5. (Stephen Wagers)

ORACLE

Do I hear a little Maiden/Watchtower influence? Maybe, just maybe we'll hear more from Oracle in the future. Excellent musicianship and very cool time changes. I'm not big into speed metal, but the guys are destined to be a future force to be reckoned with in Christian metal. Tasty guitar work. Keep up the good work boys. To order, send \$5 (plus \$1 postage) to: Shawn Peralta, 4614-A Mercury Dr, Greensboro NC 27410. (Stephen Wagers)

REALITY

Here's some good melodic metal with lots of good ideas, but weak production, vocals, and a lack of aggression hold these songs back from truly bowling you over. This is obviously a demo and not a professional performance (and everyone in the band is between 16 and 17 years old), so I'll stick to the material. **Shine As A Light** carries some good energy and follows a good commercial formula. **You And Me** is a poor ballad written for someone with a much fuller sounding voice, since so many of the phrases are carried out. **Crucifixion, Death-Resurrection** is a hard driving song with thin guitar tones and a gravelly alto-like voice that does articulate well, especially with the Scandinavian accent to boot. A really cool line of "God sent His Son to you" is delivered over a well-planned rhythm, giving it that "stop and listen" feel. **Why?** is probably the best cut, with its strong guitar sounds and vocal melodies.

For ordering info, write: Reality, c/o Bjero Hildebrandt, Hakon 7. veg., 4700 Vennesla, Norway. (Doug Van Pelt)

OVERDRIVE **"A GRAVE MISTAKE"**

Whoa nelly! What a band! Where have they been hiding? Come on record

companies, wake up and sign this band now! I can't find one bad thing about this tape. I like all kinds of metal, but the Barren Cross/Sacred Warrior style is my favorite, and these guys go at it full force. I love it when a band puts scripture references throughout the songs, because it allows me to get into the Word and go beyond the song, also showing the band's maturity. Overdrive has 74 references in just four songs!

The songs like **When The Saints Go Marching In (To Hell)** and **You Need A Friend** are nothing fancy, just straight-ahead metal that's so good it's scary! The production is excellent for a demo, and the packaging of the tape is real professional, with nice cover art, lyrics, and even a picture of the band.

Overdrive is a band to watch for in the future, and **A GRAVE MISTAKE** is a tape to pick up now! For ordering info, write: PO Box 11183, Blacksburg VA 24060. (Jeff Lott)

FINAL PROPHECY **"RUDE AWAKENING"**

Geez...sure is nice to know you can love God and still bang yer head. This 3-piece Florida-based band makes no excuses and has no qualms for Who holds centerstage in their lives. A scripture (Mark 8:31-35) backed by eerie music and read to send chills up your spine starts the tape off. It definitely gets your attention. Just check out **We Must Die**: "Forget about religion/forget about tradition/just live by His Word." Powerful words, in essence, saying it all. Could easily wipe any run-of-the-mill secular grindcore band off the map. A close comparison might be Megadeth (but only if they took a chill pill and discovered God). **Divided In Truth** shows the more melodic (what I call) power metal "ballad" sharply executed with a sense of purpose. My personal fave, **Where Pain Never Dwells**, speaks in whispering tones until it gets to the chorus. It then screams out to a place that everyone could be (where pain never dwells—get it?). A definite must-have for the hardcore set. With extra credit for the neato cover art.

To order, send \$5 to: 6664 149th Place, Palm Beach Gardens FL 33418. (Rebecca Bullock)

CRUCIBLE

Finally, a voice so smooth, so satiny you could swear it's teflon-induced. I didn't quite know what to expect (with the name being Crucible and all). I honestly thought it would be heavier. To say I was pleasantly surprised would be the understatement of the century. Crucible overflows with musicianship and talent. I must say, I was duly impressed. A fluid melodic background fronted by clear vocals gives these guys a definite jump on their fellow mates. I wish I had more songs to listen to, I really liked this song—**Never Alone**. Oh well, Crucible has a very bright future ahead of them if they keep producing songs like this.

For ordering info, write: 3201 Hillcrest Terrace, Evansville IN 47712. (Rebecca Bullock)

ORCHESTRATOR

Boy, the things you can get yourself into. I was quite baffled when I popped this puppy into the deck. A thrash—no, wait. A new

wave—uh...not that either. Classical punk overdubbed with rap metal? Aww heck. Lemme tell ya, Orchestrator covers it all (and I'm not kidding, either!). They manage to cover an 80's blend of punk, ska, rap, thrash, metal, and new wave—all rambunctiously crammed together, tossed into a blender (minus the lid) turned to hyperdrive; the stuff then sprays all over the room. Sound fun? You betcha. Although the lyrics are beyond my comprehension (not to mention few and far between), the music is not. Versatility is the word of the day with this band. Hyperkinetic drums, along with warp-drive guitar makes Orchestrator a safe alternative to those Addicted to Jane (and the other current bumper crop of alternative macrobiotic hippie music). Wanna try something different? Scope out a copy of Orchestrator.

For ordering info, write: 400 William St, Bridgeport CT 06608. (Rebecca Bullock)

RED SKY **"WORLD COME CRASHING DOWN"**

Even though the production quality on this tape is not that great, it's obvious to see that Red Sky is one hot band. There are various special effects throughout the 5-song tape, and they are used effectively, making you wonder what's about to happen next.

The musicianship of this band is great. Craig Erickson is a fantastic guitarist, who had to be influenced by Eddie Van Halen and Steve Vai. Kerri Collings is a double bass drum maniac, while Joey Martelle could easily pass for Rick Cua on vocals.

Of the three actual songs on this release (**Sunset** and **Morning** being instrumentals), **Surrender** is the best. "I want you Lord, before I burn/I've committed sins I know were wrong/Temptations here get much too strong/I give up Lord/Take me now." The lyrics are packed with emotion.

Great release. I can't wait 'till they're able to put something of album quality out. To order, send \$4.50 to: 1445 1st Ave SE, Cedar Rapids IA 52404. (Jeff Lott)

Various Artists **ULTIMATE ROCK VIDEO 2**

Star Song

This video compilation collects Whiteheart, Mylon, Novella, Newsboys, Bride, and Whitecross together. The highlights are the Newsboys **Simple Man** video, with its funny anecdotes and numerous settings, and the fact that the Novella, Bride, and Whitecross videos aren't interrupted with interview footage midway through the songs, like they were in **METAL MISSION**. Here you get the made-for-airplay version of all music soundtrack. (Spiny Norman)

MESSENGER

Some decent melodic yet heavy metal with some good song ideas and BGV's, but the lead vocals hold the band back a little on this recording, and I am guessing that the poor mix has a lot to do with it, plus the melody lines being written in such a way as to take the vocalist near the edge of his comfortable range. Some of the lead breaks in **Jailhouse Conversion** are hot. I look forward to hearing more from these guys. (Doug Van Pelt) **HM**



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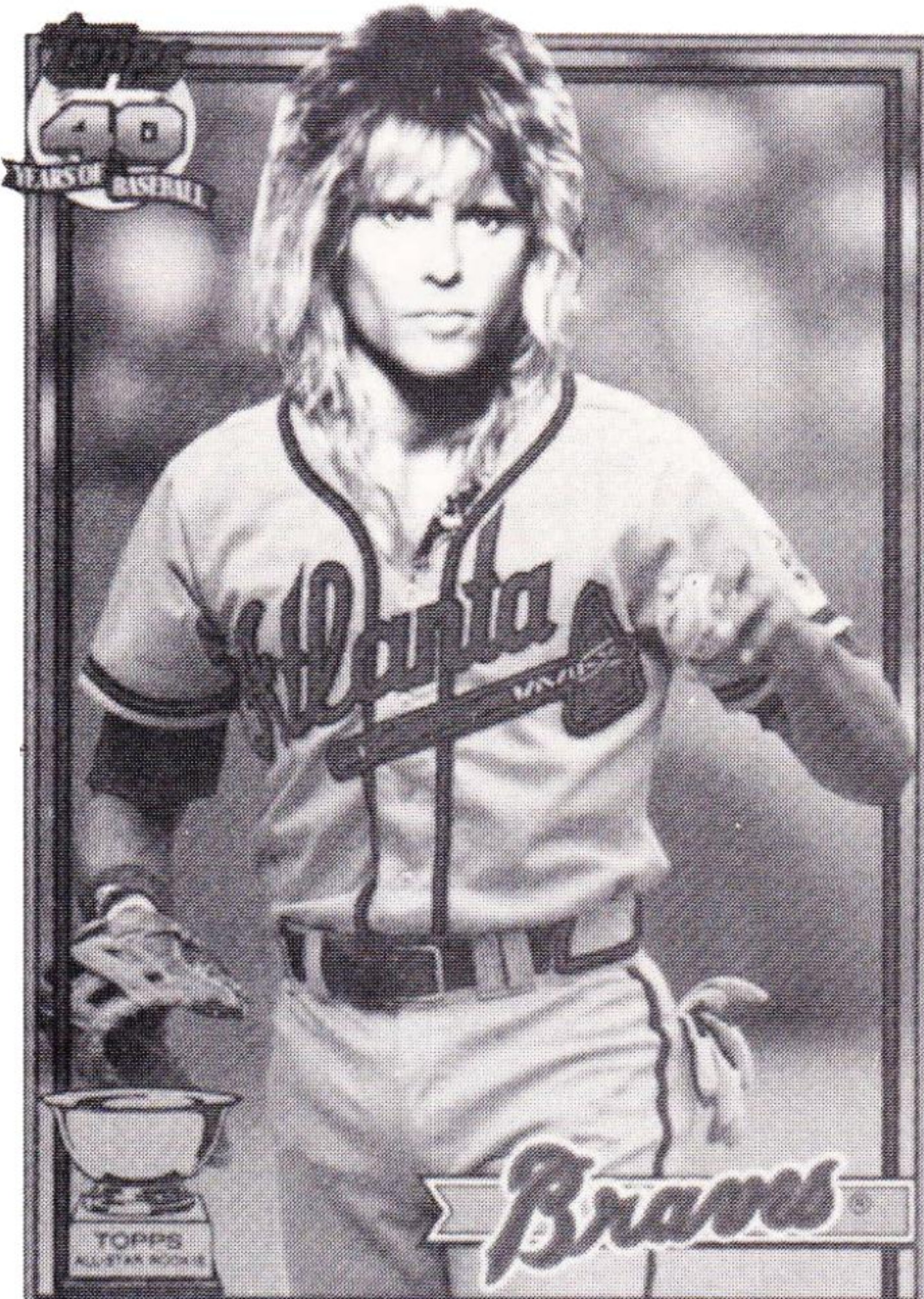
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INSIDE/OUT *By David Bach* and LICKS & TRICKS *By Jeff Scheetz*



DAVID BACH

Hey!

Howzit Rockfolk? Well...I had a dream about baseball last night. (Hum!) Y'know, when I was a kid I dreamed about playing pro ball. We didn't shoot hoop in my neighborhood, we played baseball year-round. We even carefully painted a diamond on the street where I lived. I can still see the yellow paint on the black asphalt. (Sigh!) Okay, sez you—What's Bach off his cracker about now, and what does baseball have to do with rock and roll anyway? 'cept for those cool names? (Check it out: "Cool Papa Bach," "Vida Blue Bach," and Yo! "All Thumbs Bach.") Well, rock and roll and baseball have much in common, but we'll talk about this later. First, let's check in with the dudes in "Tortured Virtue."

Ah yes, it didn't take long... Within a week after signing the legendary deal with Uncle Jake, the guys called a band meeting to discuss the bright and prosperous future. Ace was the most excited of all the guys. "Hey dudes, my wife and I went looking at houses on the lake today. She's stoked. She can't wait till we get our first big royalty check!"

"I gotta admit," smiled Biff, "I was up reading Road And Track, looking at those choice cars!"

"Not me!" beamed Max, "I'm gettin' me a Harley—black with lots of chrome! Yow!!!"

Jimmy sat quietly on the edge of his drum stool and then he spoke, "Dudes, I'm kinda bummed. My dad was not so happy that we jumped on the deal. He said we should have waited and that now we at least need a

partnership agreement so we'll know who gets what and stuff like that."

"Don't sweat it Jimmy," said Ace. "I come up with the choice riffs, I'll split anything with you guys and..."

"Whad'ya mean you write the riffs?" questions Biff, "I sang you the guitar part for 'Intestinal Fury' and then you figured it out, and besides..."

(Uh-Oh!) Soon the guys are embroiled in an argument about who does what and the fact that Ace's wife has arrived to hear the business discussion doesn't do much to calm the situation. Soon Max, Ace and his wife, Suzy, are waving new home brochures in the air and shouting at Biff, who feels he should get a bigger cut cuz he's the singer and he's the leader of the band and..."DUDES!!!" shouts Jimmy above the uproar, "Let's not fight about this now, okay? We gotta talk about recording the album and what we're gonna call it!"

"C'mon dude," shouts Ace, "I thought we were gonna call it 'Pancreatic Man,' like we talked about and..."

"No way!" Max yells, "'Intestinal Fury' is a much better title, plus we have a song called that, and furthermore..." And so the fighting continues.

One hour later, everyone is almost too upset to talk. The guys do decide to start rehearsal next week practicing the 10 songs they've picked for the album, since Uncle Jake is coming down to practice to talk to them about (Lookout!) the PRODUCER!!!

On the way home that night, Max realizes that none of them have ever gotten that upset with each other before, but "Hey," he thought, "A record contract—Seltzer Bros. Records—The big time... I know we can work it out."

SURVEY SEZ: Watch it guys. Let's not put the cart before the horse. We all know that the big boys seem to get houses and cars from their music, but the guys in Tortured Virtue need to realize that they may get nothing. What!!!? That's right. In terms of any tangible money—ZIP! Sure, you get the awesome ministry benefits and the privilege of releasing your music publicly, but you won't be falling off yer wallet anytime soon. Times is lean at the bottom, and it is a long way to the top if you wanna rock and roll. But, never the less, be prepared in season and out.

Jimmy's dad is right—a partnership agreement is a very important thing. It will serve as your business structure and outline. Cuz it's one thing to be bro's in the garage, but (Even with Christians) a little bit of cash or even the hint of a golden ticket can make the best intended pals act goofy. You don't have to have a lawyer for this (But it's a good idea). Just state clearly all the particulars: You know, Who gets what? An even split or not? Kicking a member out or

bringing a new one in? Tithing off the top, etc. Your partnership agreement can be whatever you guys decide—Just do decide before someone gets their nose out of joint because of a misunderstanding early on.

So, just what is the connection between baseball and rock and roll? Well, our pals in Tortured Virtue humor themselves that they've signed with Seltzer Bros.—the biggest label in the world—but the truth is that they are really going to be working with Uncle Jake's thrice removed second cousin subsidiary label. Just like in baseball (Huh?), the guys in Tortured Virtue may have been signed by the Los Angeles Dodgers, but in reality they'll be playin' "AA" ball for the Missoula Mudhens. Look at the back of any hot rookie's baseball card—odds are that he spent the last few years playing on minor league teams that you never heard of. Same thing in music—Be ready to work and to work hard! Don't kid yourself about the big time and the big money. Start small and keep your costs low. Don't let your dreams set you up for a fall!

Like I said earlier, when I was younger I wanted to play pro baseball. I could run, I could field, I could get on base, but...I couldn't hit a curve ball, and you know what? Even in this business of rock and roll, I still can't hit those curve balls. I've just learned how not to get hit! See ya!

"Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth." (Proverbs 27:1)

"Let another praise you, and not your own mouth. Someone else, and not your own lips." (Proverbs 27:2)

"He who works his land will have abundant food, but the one who chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty." (Proverbs 28:19 NIV)

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HM



Alright!

I hope you're all warmed up, because this time we are doing some octave jumping! (Don't worry moms, it's not too dangerous.) These types of licks are great to get you thinking in terms of larger intervals.

Although a certain amount of "sweep" (or economy) picking can be used to execute this lick, I suggest working it out with alternate picking. Due to the fact that you will be skipping so many strings, it is a great right hand/alternate picking exercise.

I hope this provides you with some fresh new ideas. If anyone has anything they would like to see me cover in future issues, feel free to drop me a line! J.S., Box 10135, Kansas City MO 64111. HM

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PASTOR BOB



Photo by Sandra Mayurnik

It's the same ol' nightmare—sitting in my high school Math class. I'll never get out of high school if I don't pass this class. Why does the teacher hate me? He's always picking on me and purposely asking me questions that are above my head. Why does he like to make me look stupid? I feel like a complete fool in front of my classmates. Words cannot describe how much I hate this class—and Math, for that matter. I desperately want to get out of here, but I'm hopelessly trapped...

Whew! I'm always relieved to wake up and find out it was only a dream!

I've had this dream now for many years! I vividly remember that Math class as if it were only yesterday—when, in truth, it was over 20 years ago! Every time I'm forced to figure out a Mathematical problem, that feeling of hatred and frustration comes back, because of that bad experience, I still hate Math today! I wonder if a lot of other people from my high school Math class now feel that same way? It's amazing how much one bad teacher can really mess up your mind!

As I think back on this experience, I can't help but remember some very similar times in church. There were many times when the Bible was presented by people who were less than exciting, and even worse, less than excited themselves. They presented the Bible as being no more than an exercise in discipline. It was like swallowing medicine that tastes terrible because you know it's good for you!

As I continue to talk to many of you from all over the world, I am amazed at how many are suffering from the same thing! You're trying very hard to be a "good" Christian, but you still have a real bad taste in your mouth that was left there by some bad experiences. Maybe you grew up in a church much like the one I just described—or you've had a bad experience with someone trying to cram the Bible down your throat.

It's a sad thing that the Bible—the source of all comfort and healing—is viewed by many as bad-tasting medicine! The saints of old speak quite differently about the effects of God's Word in our lives. In Romans 15:4, Paul the apostle tells us:

"Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope."

God's Word does teach us discipline, but the end result of what we learn is

encouragement and hope! I had no encouragement or hope from what I learned in my high school Math class, and even today the memories only bring discouragement. The things I learned could have been very beneficial, if only the teacher had presented them properly.

There was nothing wrong with the Math—only the Math teacher! Please don't let a bad experience or a bad teacher color your view of God's Word! If you avoid God's Word, you only hurt yourself! In Acts 20:32, in Paul's final words to the Ephesian elders, He said:

"Now I commit you to God and to the Word of His grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified."

God's Word builds us up—it doesn't discourage us! We all need to be built up and encouraged in God's Word. It's the promises in God's Word that give us hope! If you want to see a big difference in your life, start reading and meditating on God's Word daily! (and forget the past!)

"I have put my hope in Your Word. My eyes stay open through the watches of the night, that I may meditate on Your promises. (Psalm 119:147b-148)

For a complete listing of Pastor Bob's teaching tapes, write to: Sanctuary, PO Box 4130, Redondo Beach CA 90278-8330. **HM**



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THE CHRISTIAN AND ART By Kemper Crabb

ART AND WORK: PART I - THE QUICK FIX

Many, many are the times that someone has brought me, or played for me, or (worse yet) played a song for an audience, saying beforehand, "God gave me this song," and the song STINKS (as in, a horrible piece of work). Most Christians I know have had this distressing experience. Why do I think this is a "distressing" experience? Glad you asked! Let me explain.

Understand, please, that I'm not saying that God can't or doesn't give people songs (He can and does, on occasion); but, generally, the songs that follow this solemn pronouncement are cliched, poorly written, terrible songs—and God doesn't write bad songs.

Don't get me wrong. I believe God in a very real sense gives all songs, since all talents, abilities, and correct perceptions are gifts from Him, because God made everything (Col. 1:16-17; John 1:1-3, 10). There is really no such thing as a "boot-strap" ethic (e.g. "I pulled myself up by my own boot-straps") about anything, including songwriting, performance, or any of the Arts, because even the desire, the strength, the very hands necessary to pull yourself up are only gifts from God: As Scripture says, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, Who does not change like shifting shadows." (James 1:17 NAS)

I also believe that God gives people songs more directly; He has done it for me and for other people I know, and we can say along with Elihu in Job 35:10, "He giveth me songs in the night." Even here, though, generally this happens for those of us who have spent years developing a musical and lyrical "vocabulary" to act as a backdrop for this supernatural action of God as He utilizes abilities and preparation.

I even believe that God, very occasionally, gives a great song to a rankly unprepared neophyte writer. The reason He doesn't do this too frequently is that He mercifully wants us to "work out our own salvation" (Phil. 2:12), to grow and mature as His children. (Eph. 4:13-14)

What I object to is using the statement "God gave me this" as a flip (or even solemn) cover-up for laziness or self-deception by the writer/performer, as laziness or self-deception that hurts not only the Body of Christ (and, through the Body, the world whose hopes are tied to the Church), but also hurts the artist by keeping him from developing his God-given talent, to the edification of the Church (we saw last issue how musician/writers are needed by the Church). That this leads to later hurt can clearly be seen in the Parable of the Talents (Matt. 25:14-30) and in similar passages such as Luke 12:48.

The truth of the matter is that most utterers of the "magic phrase" are never held accountable by their audience (in this case, their brothers and sisters in Christ) for how little effort and time they've put into a song that is intended to represent their Lord, the All-Perfect Creator

Who is the very Source of all beauty and creativity. Attributing poorly done work to the Lord all too often keeps the artist from having to face his own laziness or self-delusion, since few people would dare to critique something that has supposedly come from God's Own Hand. We all must learn to discern what has truly come from God and what has not. What God gives reflects His Own Excellence.

The bottom line is that many artists who do this are afflicted by a quest for, and a belief in, a quick-fix for their underdeveloped ability. This is simply indicative of our shallow and impatient culture as a whole, e.g., "I want patience, and I want it now!!" Very few people wait and work hard for a long-term goal (such as becoming a talented, developed artist).

The Biblical truth is that there is no quick-fix. Even though we are regenerated quickly, it still takes our whole lives to have the outworking of that regeneration make us sanctified and holy, as we'll see next issue... **HM**

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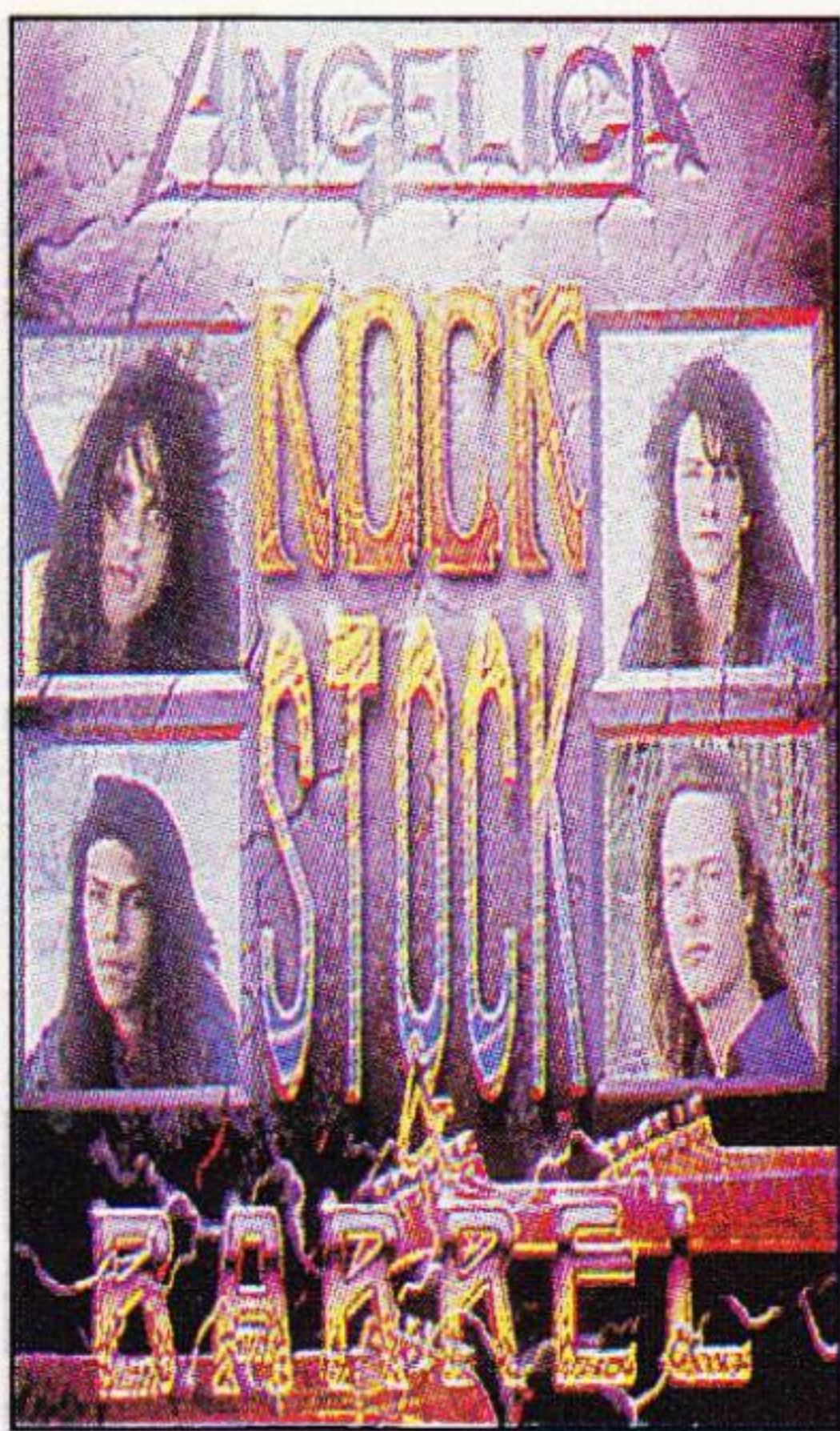
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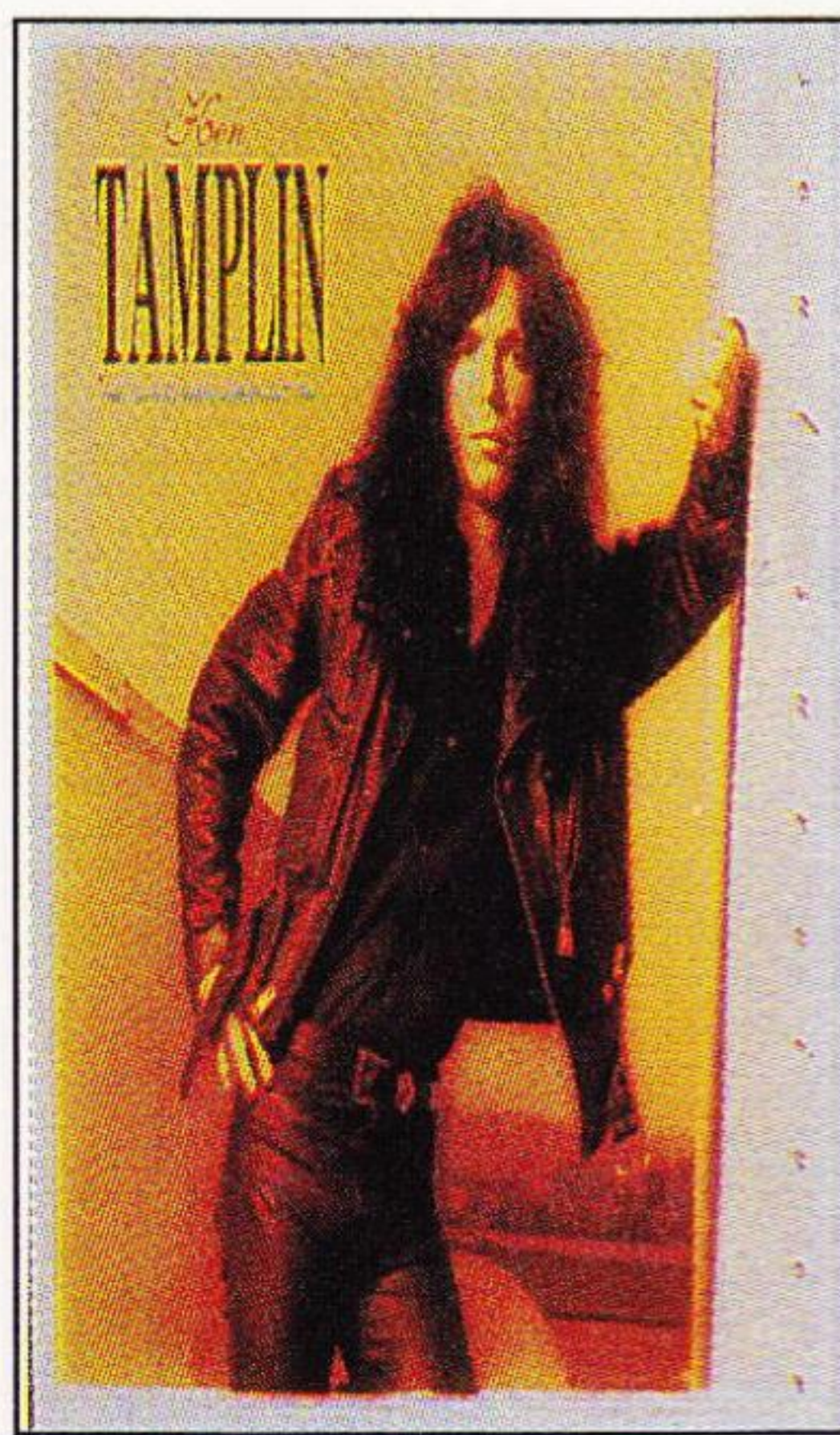
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ANGELICA



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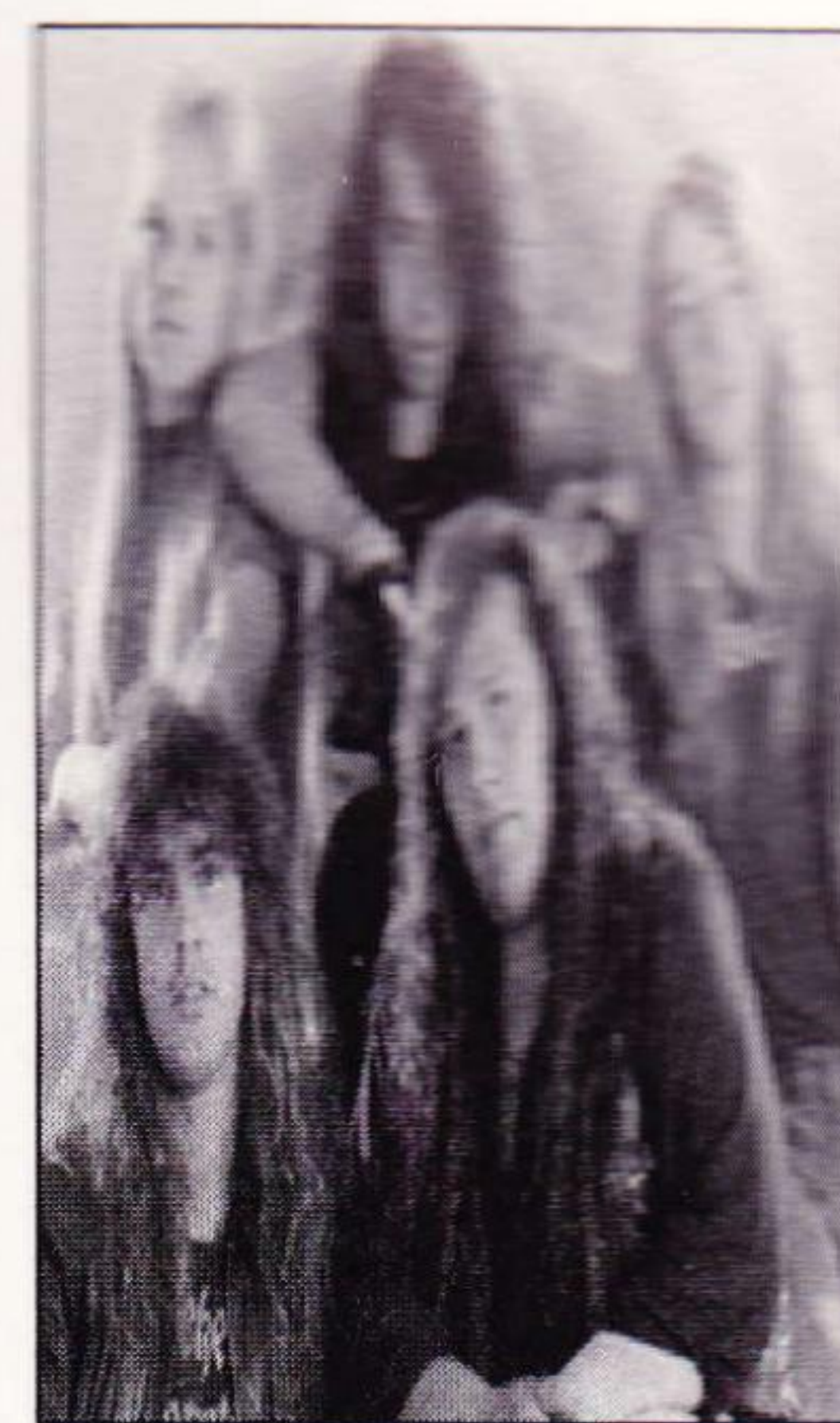
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What are you worth? Medical scientists say your body's chemicals are worth just under \$3.00. God, on the other hand, thinks you're worth far more than that. When He went about His plan of redemption, which means "buying back" that which was His, He didn't think twice about what He would pay for you. He didn't go to K-Mart looking for a "Blue Light Special." He was willing to sacrifice and give His very best. He was willing to give His own Son—Jesus. That means that God thinks you're worth the death of His Son. Can you believe that? If you do, you will experience a peace and an exciting and proper understanding of His love for you.

The very nature of love is giving, and God displayed His love in living, breathing color 1,991 years ago. Those who were alive at the time had the privilege of seeing God's love,

grace, truth, and glory personified in one man—Jesus. This person gave of Himself constantly. He taught, fed, and healed many people. He even washed His disciples' feet. He showed respect and honor for people that often didn't get it in those times: women, Canaanites, children, tax-gatherers, prostitutes, and Samaritans. He treated each person with dignity. He even taught people to treat the lowly with special regard and honor. If He were around today, I'm sure He would fellowship with both the drug-dealing "outlaw motorcycle gang" member and the Islamic terrorist.

When Jesus was on the earth, He never addressed someone as a "sinner." He referred to people as "lost." That's an interesting term, because it infers a value. If you misplace something of no value, you will

discard it and reject it; but if you can't find something of value, you have "lost" it and you'll search for it until you find it. For example, let's say One Bad Pig misplaces one of the cheap, busted-up guitars they use for smashing in concert. It will be no big deal to them. They'll simply go to a pawn shop and buy another one for \$15 or so. But, if the Pig's guitarist misplaced his Kramer, he would look for it desperately until it was found.

Get the picture? If you are lost, God will go to great measures until you are "found." The price He paid for you is far greater than all the silver and gold in the world. So, the next time someone, or some evil spirit, tells you you're "good for nothing," tell them it ain't so. You are worth everything to your Father in Heaven.

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